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TOP 10 2011 EX-GAY STORIES

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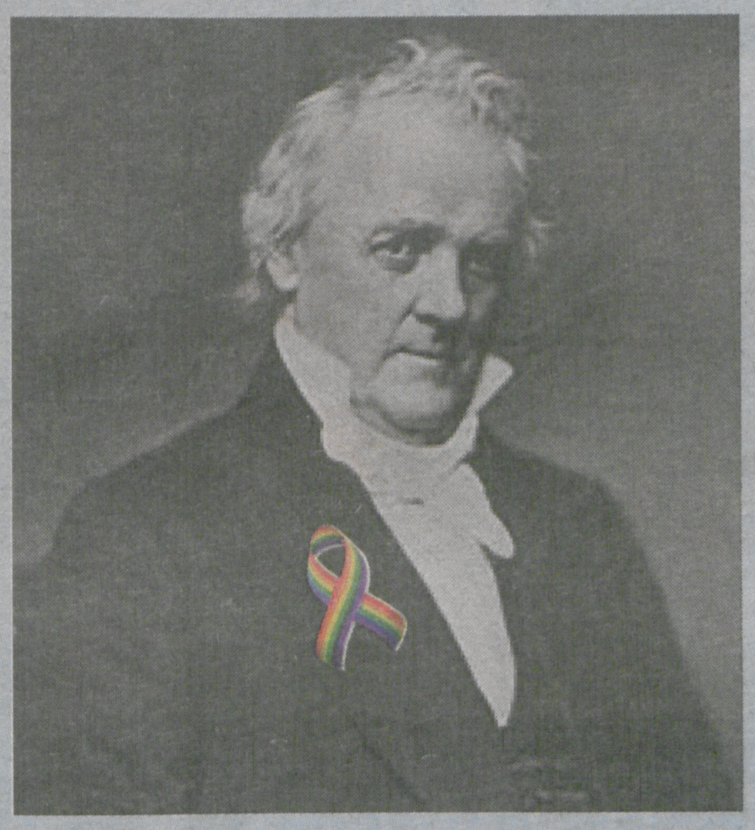
FREE

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2012

JAMES BUCHANAN:

America's First Gay President?



By Timothy Cwiek
Exclusively for Central Voice
National Gay History Project

More than 150 years before America elected its first black president, Barack Obama, it most likely had its first gay president, James Buchanan (1791-1868).

Buchanan, a Democrat from Lancaster County, Pa., was the 15th president of the United States, and a lifelong bachelor. He served as president from 1857-61, tumultuous years leading up to the Civil War.

Historian James W. Loewen has done extensive research into Buchanan's personal life, and he's convinced Buchanan was gay.

Loewen is the author of the acclaimed book "Lies Across America," which examines how historical sites inaccurately portray figures and events in America's past.

"I'm sure that Buchanan was gay," Loewen said. "There is clear evidence that he was gay. And since I haven't seen any evidence that he was heterosexual, I don't believe he was bisexual."

According to Loewen, Buchanan shared a residence with William Rufus King, a Democratic senator from Alabama, for several years in Washington, D.C.

Loewen said contemporary records indicate the two men were inseparable, and wags would refer to them as "the Siamese twins."

Loewen also said Buchanan was "fairly open" about his relationship with King, causing some colleagues to view the men as a couple.

For example, Aaron Brown, a prominent Democrat, writing to Mrs. James K. Polk, referred to King as Buchanan's "better half," "his wife" and "Aunt Fancy … rigged out in her best clothes."

In 1844, when King was appointed minister to France, he wrote Buchanan, "I am selfish enough to hope you will not be able to procure an associate who will cause you to feel no regret at our separation."

Loewen also said a letter Buchanan wrote to

Continued on page 32

Susquehanna Twp. Passes Anti-discrimination Law

■ ***Which municipality will be 27th?***

By a seven to one bipartisan vote Susquehanna Twp. Commissioners on Dec. 8 adopted a non-discrimination ordinance proposed by township resident Steve Dorko. One commissioner was absent.

The process began last July and garnered mostly support from township residents, although anti-gay Pittsburgh-based American Family Association of PA unsuccessfully joined the debate.

The township is the 26th municipality in the state to pass such an ordinance. The new law bans discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, and discrimination based on genetic information for what the municipality defines as public accommodations.

"discrimination against anyone, including LGBT people, is simply unwelcome"
~ Adrian Shanker
Equality PA president

At press time, advocates in Cheltenham Township were working through the new ordinance process with that municipality's board of commissioners. Equality PA president Adrian Shanker told Central Voice that he'd testified before the board that passing the ordinance makes it clear "discrimination against anyone, including LGBT people, is simply unwelcome" and that "discrimination is not a value of this community." The proposed Cheltenham measure applies to employment,

Continued on page 22

Chris Dietz

Chris Dietz Announces Run for 104th State Rep Seat

■ ***2011 FAB award honoree***

Dauphin County resident and Millersburg Borough Council president Chris Dietz announced Dec. 14 his candidacy for the 104th district of the Pa. House of Representatives.

He will run in the May 2012 Primary Election followed by the November General Election.

Following a contentious redistricting statewide, the newly drawn map of the 104th House district includes the boroughs of Dauphin, Halifax, Millersburg and Penbrook and the townships of East Hanover (in Dauphin and Lebanon Counties), Halifax, Jefferson, Middle Paxton, North Annville, Reed, Rush, Susquehanna, Upper Paxton, Wayne, and Wards 4 and 7 in Swatara.

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INSIDE PAGES:

Wider Role for 2012 Pride Festival pg. 22

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Political Update

By Frank Pizzoli

Pushback Felt on Anti-bias Laws

As municipalities across the state move to pass anti-bias laws, the political pushback involves legal challenges to ordinances. Two such challenges are now working their way through courts.

Haverford faces a call for a permanent injunction preventing the township from implementing an LGBT anti-bias ordinance enacted last February. The ordinance expands existing protections in employment, housing and public accommodations to the LGBT community. In Conshohocken, a request has been made that a judge invalidate the municipality's LGBT anti-bias ordinance because, the petitioner claims, the law conflicts with existing state laws.

PSU & Open Records Law

State Rep. Eugene DePasquale, D-York, has authored legislation removing the exemption for state-related universities from Pennsylvania's Right-To-Know Law. "In the wake of the recent allegations revolving around Penn State, I find it imperative that the open records law be amended to include state-related institutions under its purview," DePasquale said. The bill also adds Temple University, University of Pittsburgh and Lincoln University to the list of organizations that must abide by the guidelines for state agencies set forth under Pa.'s Right-To-Know Law.

In a related matter, State Rep. Kevin Boyle has introduced legislation aimed at ensuring that people who witness the abuse of a child report it to law enforcement. Boyle's legislation would change current law so that staff members of institutions must immediately notify law enforcement. Current law only requires that the abuse be reported to the person in charge of the institution, school, facility or agency or the designated agent of the person in charge.

PA LGBT Hate Crimes Up

Pennsylvania	**1,347**	**12,659,293**	**31**	**57**

For 2010 in Pennsylvania, there were 1,347 agencies participating in the reporting, representing the state's 12.6 million residents. Thirty-one agencies reported 57 incidents, according to FBI statistics. The overall increase is the first one noted since 2004, the last year the state experienced an increase in the number of hate crimes. The largest jump recorded involves incidents motivated by the victims' sexual orientation. Of the 57 total hate-crimes incidents in Pennsylvania in 2010, 10 were related to sexual orientation, compared with 46 total crimes the previous year, five of which were motivated by sexual orientation. The increase is almost a 7% spike in LGBT-related crimes.

Gay, lesbian candidates win big across US

According to gaypolitics.com, openly gay and lesbian candidates endorsed by the Gay & Lesbian Victory Fund won election to municipal, judicial and state legislative offices in last November's General Election. Of the 75 candidates endorsed by VF, 53 were victorious.

Candidates in Indianapolis, Cincinnati and Charlotte, N.C., made history, becoming the first openly gay or lesbian candidates elected to those city councils. In Virginia, Adam Ebbin became the first openly gay person elected to the State Senate, and in New Jersey, Tim Eustace became the first non-incumbent openly gay candidate to win a seat in the State Assembly.

Of the 75 candidates endorsed by VF in 2011, 46 were non-incumbents, 22 were women and 15 were people of color and include Daniel Hernandez, Jr., the intern who helped save the life of Rep. Gabrielle Giffords, who was elected to his local school board in Pima County, Ariz.

Community Center Names 2012 Board Officers

Stuart Landon

LGBT Community Center Coalition of Central Pennsylvania has announced the election of the 2012 board of directors officers including Stuart Landon as president and Patricia Van Horn as vice president. Elizabeth Mullaugh will continue as an officer and takes the role of treasurer. Patricia Bucek remains as secretary and Dorothy Fulton and Benjamin C. Dunlap, Jr. continue to serve as ad hoc members of the executive committee.

The diverse group of board officers is come from the fields of healthcare, entertainment, non-profit, legal, government and marketing. They will help oversee the organization's growth and strategy as part of the center's effort to create common ground for the LGBT community and allies in central Pennsylvania by providing services through spiritual, educational and cultural activities that foster wholeness.

"We are honored to welcome this new team of officers," the center's director of education and youth services Louie Marven said. "They bring a range of experience and perspective that will enhance our board's ability to provide stewardship for the center's continued growth. I look forward to working with them as we strive to connect with the region's LGBT community. This is a great next step for us."

The center's 2012 board also includes Joshua Appleman, Marilynn Kanenson, Marlene Kanuck, Alexis Lake, and Stinson Stroup.

"This is going to be a fantastic year," Landon said. "I am very proud to be on this team and we are seeking energetic volunteers of the community to join the many committees at our center. There are programs for everyone." Individuals interested in becoming a committee member can contact the center at 717-920-9534 or info@centralpalgbtcenter.org.

Common Roads Opens Carlisle Program

With support from The Foundation for Enhancing Communities (TFEC) and a team of volunteers, the LGBT Community Center recently launched a new chapter of Common Roads in Carlisle. Common Roads Carlisle meets 6-8 p.m. every Thursday at the Carlisle Hatha Yoga Center, 14 W. Louther Street.

Common Roads Carlisle expands the center's current youth services which now includes weekly meetings for LGBTQ youth ages 14-22 in Harrisburg, Lancaster, and now Carlisle; support for area gay-straight alliance student groups, including an annual leadership summit; and staff training for professionals working with youth.

Historic Harrisburg Association Now Has Tenant

Founded in 1973, Historic Harrisburg Association held their annual membership meeting Nov. 16, 2011 at which time renovations completed for tenant Pennsylvania Downtown Center were toured. With a newly installed HVAC system, the historic facility, formerly a bank, is now available for program and event rentals. From left: David Morrison, former first executive director and currently chairman of the board; Eric Hein, former assistant executive director and currently president, of Washington-based Preservation Action; and John Campbell, current executive director and beginning Jan. 1 Harrisburg's elected city treasurer.

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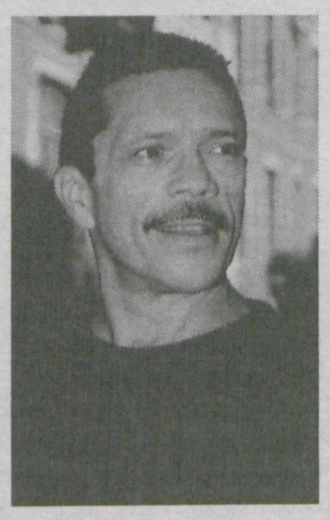
publisher's note



Frank Pizzoli

Watch Where You Drop that Shopping Cart

I'm not sure there is such a phenomena as "Karma". At least not as an adjudicated response to life's injustices. Where would one house a Court of Karma anyway? Could one appeal a decision? Are you appointed a lawyer if you cannot afford one?

I do believe there's lots of chaos and that random chance at times creates great miseries and satisfying comeuppance. Such is the situation with two preteen boys who have been charged with dropping a shopping cart over a fourth-story railing in East Harlem. They nearly killed a philanthropist who was shopping for underprivileged kids. Watch where you drop that shopping cart.

If there's no Karma, there's luck. The two larval adults were to be sentenced to probation after they plead guilty to felony assault. He could have been given up to five years in jail.

"I held the shopping cart over, and I knew people was down there," 12-year-old Jiovianni Rosario said sadly in admitting his guilt before Family Court. "And I knew somebody could have gotten hurt." The victim, Marion Hedges, was in serious condition after being hit by the shopping cart. The 47-year-old Manhattan real-estate agent had just bought Halloween candy in bulk from the nearby Costco. Hedges' 13-year-old son was with her, and witnessed her get struck down.

The second boy, Ray Hernandez, remained jailed at press time. He'll either take a similar plea or go to trial.

No, I'm not happy anyone was hurt or got caught in the act. Imperfect beings that we all are, there's not one among us – if there is, please write us – who hasn't tempted, even taunted, fate. And most of the time our poking the universe in the eye goes unnoticed. Except when it doesn't, like with these two lads.

Smell a New Year's Resolution?

I resolve to not tempt the universe just because I can.

your voice

Did Government Pick Winners?

Submitted by PennFuture

The PennFuture Energy Center for Enterprise and the Environment released a new study today detailing current subsidies for fossil fuels in Pennsylvania, which, including tax exemptions, tax credits, and grants, total $2.9 billion per year.

"Despite all the woe and consternation by some about incentives for new clean energy technology, like solar and wind power, the big dirty secret is that the highly profitable, fully mature fossil fuel industry is subsidized to the hilt," says Christina Simeone, director of the PennFuture Energy Center. "Because of these subsidies, coal, oil, and natural gas have been chosen as the energy 'winners' in Pennsylvania. And the taxpayers are in many cases footing the bill.

"While pundits like to claim that all they want is for the free market to reign supreme, there is simply no free and unfettered market for energy in Pennsylvania," continued Simeone. "Renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies, while still developing, are starting from behind and staying behind, as these subsidies continue. If there truly were a level playing field, Pennsylvania's vibrant wind and solar industries would be even more successful than they have been.

PennFUTURE
Every environmental victory grows the economy.

"Use of these fuels also burdens taxpayers with additional costs such as air, land, and water pollution, which result in deteriorating public health and damage to property," continued Simeone. "But it's actually even worse than that. Taxpayers pay for the subsidies that promote fossil fuels that release pollution, and then the polluters are given even more subsidies to help pay for cleaning up that pollution.

"Yet, as the Pittsburgh Business Times reported today, Governor Corbett just pulled his name from a letter of support for the renewable energy production tax credit, a federal incentive for wind energy, claiming that Congress must sharpen its knives in cutting the federal budget. But he is silent on the plethora of subsidies our own state gives to the fossil fuel industry, even as education, transportation, and other vital state functions have been cut from the state budget.

"The legislature and Governor Corbett should rethink and ultimately end this gravy train for fossil fuels," said Simeone. "These subsidies are bad for the health of our families and businesses, bad for the environment, and bad for Pennsylvania's economy."

letters to the editor

Comments

Thanks so much for the opportunity to write for Central Voice. My column is already generating comments from people.

Terry Drew Karanen, LSW, MSW, DD
Founder and Director
New Thought Center of Central PA

Gratitude

I wanted to express my gratitude for your story on my Get Equal experience in Memphis. Having my work noted in Central Voice maybe can inspire other leaders/activist to rise and fight for LGBTQ equality here in Pennsylvania. I hope that my story will inspire people to stand up and take bold actions in our fight for civil rights and not be afraid to do so.

Luis O. Medina
LGBTQ Civil Rights Activist

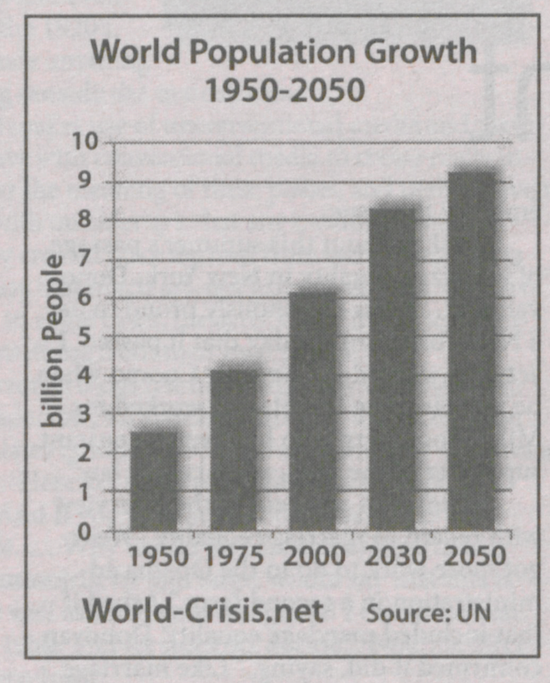
Our Most Urgent Crisis: Seven Billion People

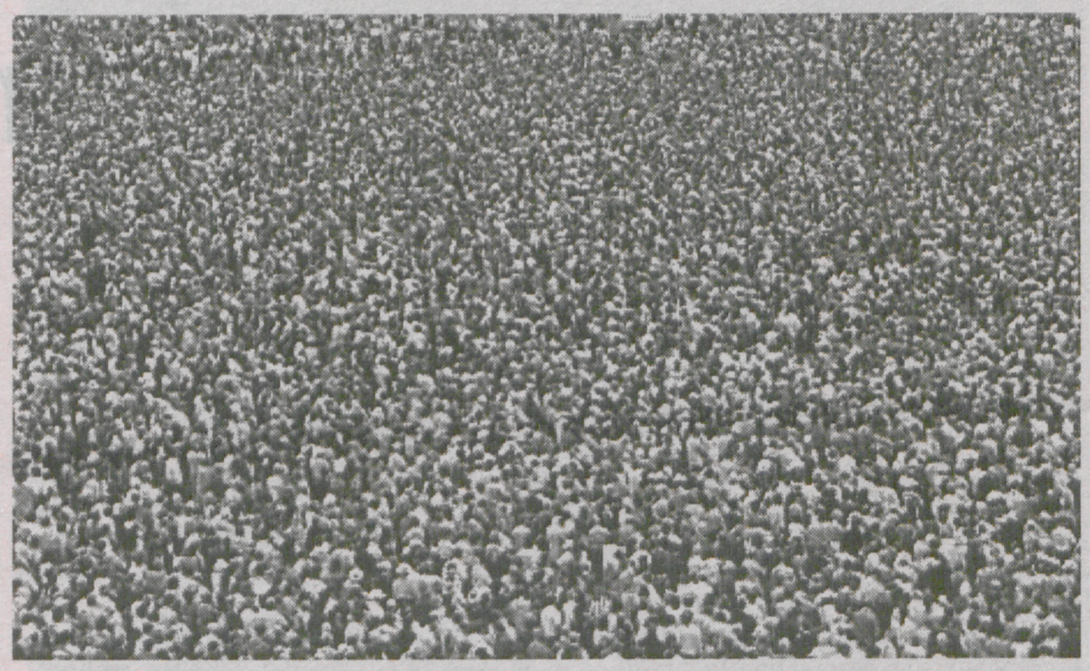
In 1804, the world reached a billion people for the first time. It took another 123 years to 1927 to see our next billion. Now we are hitting a billion new people every dozen years. This month the milestone of hitting seven billion people is no cause to celebrate. In fact, it is a milestone of the world's greatest crisis - overpopulation.

Almost every single problem we are facing on the earth is directly related to our out of control population growth. Just look at some of the problems that totally originate from our failure to control our balance between people and resources:

- Climate Change
- Disappearance of our Wildlife
- World hunger
- Lack of energy
- Shortage of Water
- Plagues/ Disease and Flu epidemics
- Wars over land, resources and shortages
- Extreme Poverty
- Disappearance of our forests, rivers and environment
- The fact that our oceans will in the not so far off future have no fish.

The list is simply endless and yet more than any other issue we refuse to come to terms with this explosive trend. Why? In large part because of religious beliefs that hold back the political will to honestly tackle this looming disaster. In some cases, countries take pride that they have so many people. Nigeria has grown 28% in the last sixty years. While they often boast of this achievement the nation is on the verge of becoming ungovernable.





What's to be done?

America can lead the way by courageously facing the issue head on. Here are some suggestions:

- Offering tax incentives NOT to have children
- Massive sex education programs in our schools
- Free and totally accessible birth control measures to all people.
- Use the tax code to folks who insist on having large families so they pay to ease the burden they are placing on the country.
- Use our foreign assistance programs and tie them directly to a nation's population control programs
- Use programs like the Peace Corps and other health initiatives to create access to birth control in other countries.
- Massive educational programs on the impact on the planet, our people and the future if we don't control our population.

There are so many other possibilities. One factor is very clear. To attempt to deal with the world's complex issues without coming to terms with out of control population growth is simply insane.

Fix Inadequate Marcellus Shale Bills

Submitted by
House Democratic Committee

Legislators, experts and local officials recently called for significant improvements to two Marcellus Shale bills. House Bill 1950 and Senate Bill 1100 were passed out of their respective chambers last month. House and Senate Republican leaders and Gov. Tom Corbett are currently negotiating differences in the legislation.

Experts from across the state explained flaws with the rate of the impact fee, the distribution of fee proceeds, the pre-emption of local zoning ordinances and other regulations, drilling location restrictions, Oil and Gas Lease Fund disbursements and air emissions from drilling. Among those attending were House Democratic Caucus Chairman Dan Frankel, Whip Mike Hanna and Policy Committee Chairman Mike Sturla.

Vitali noted that the effective tax rate of House Bill 1950 is only 1 percent and just 2.2 percent in Senate Bill 1100. Texas has a tax rate of 7.5 percent on gas drilling.

"Both bills are both woefully inadequate," Vitali said. "The impact fee they call for is significantly less than what other natural gas-producing states are collecting."

Former Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Secretary John Quigley said the disbursement from the Oil and Gas Lease Fund in House Bill 1950 takes needed funds away from state conservation programs and will force Pennsylvania to lease more state forests for gas drilling.

"What we should be discussing is not defunding conservation, not disinvesting in the public lands, not subsidizing a well-heeled industry, but rather how Pennsylvania can wisely invest income from state forest leases in a way that will permanently strengthen Pennsylvania's public lands, environment, economy, and quality of life," Quigley said.

Several speakers said the state should have a severance tax on the industry, instead of an optional local fee assessed by counties. Ronald Cowell, former chairman of the state House Education Committee and current president of the Education Policy and Leadership Center, said money generated by a tax could boost education funding in Pennsylvania, which lags many other states. Cowell noted that Pennsylvania provides $1,700 less in state funding per pupil than West Virginia.

Fred Bohls from Trout Unlimited said the bills should do more to protect waterways from pollution or they will face the same legacy caused by coal mining. He said setbacks from streams should be increased from 300 feet to 500 feet in the legislation, and setbacks from water supplies should be increased to 2,500 feet.

"Pennsylvania's streams are still reeling from the last major energy extraction, and there are still more than 5,000 miles of acid-impaired waterways that need to be restored across the commonwealth," Bohls said. "We must make sure that Pennsylvania is taking every possible precaution to avoid facing another legacy of energy-related pollution."

State Rep. Robert Freeman, Democratic chairman of the House Local Government Committee, and Jim Dunn, chairman of the Armstrong Township supervisors in Lycoming County, said provisions that exempt gas drillers from local zoning and make the Pennsylvania Attorney General the judge if those regulations are proper should be dropped from the bills.

"Taking the authority to accomplish coordinated development, safety, health, general welfare and comprehensive planning away from local government and giving it to the state's attorney general is unreasonable," Dunn said.

Lauren Burge, an attorney from Group Against Smog and Pollution (G.A.S.P.), called for the legislation to do more to address the air pollution problem caused by Marcellus drilling.

"Emissions from the natural gas industry pose a significant threat to our air quality, and Pennsylvania is behind in addressing this problem," Burge said. "It is essential that we take steps as soon as possible to fully regulate emissions from this growing industry."

"The plans ignore real costs imposed by this industry on all of the state's taxpayers – protection of our water, air, and wild spaces; degradation of state roads and bridges and state police protection," added Michael Wood, a researcher with the Pennsylvania Budget and Policy Center. "We can, and should do better than this."

Local Advocate Hears HUD Secretary at Transgender Event

Shaun Donovan

For the first time in history a member of a US president's cabinet spoke to a fundraising event for transgender rights. Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Shaun Donovan Nov. 15, 2011, spoke at the National Center for Transgender Equality annual dinner in Washington, DC. He outlined the Obama's administrations record on transgender rights.

In the audience that evening were local activist and advocate, Jeanine Ruhsam, and former local resident Mara Keisling. Ruhsam is president of TransCentralPA and co-chairs the Keystone Conference, an event that brings several hundred individuals to the region annually. Keisling is the founding executive director of the National Center for Transgender Equality.

Donovan, Ruhsam tells Central Voice, stressed his commitment to full equality for transgender people, especially in his arena of authority as HUD secretary.

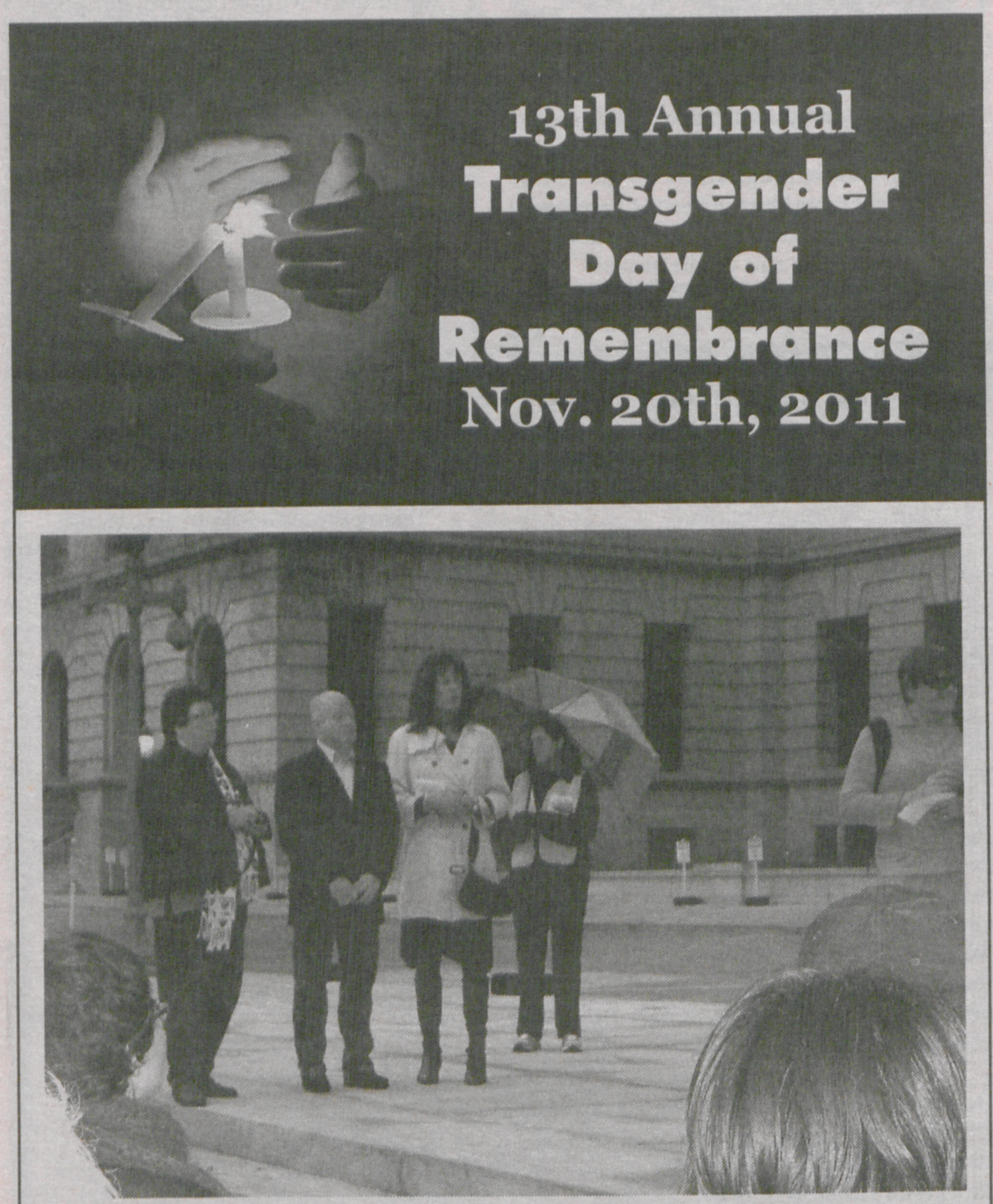
"His support of marriage equality for all people, of course, is linked directly to trans equality, where by the very nature of being transgender the definitions of "man" and "woman" are blurred and marriages of trans people are in jeopardy if not illegal as is the current case in most states," Ruhman said.

In an exclusive interview with Washington's Metro Weekly Donovan, without condition, supported full marriage equality. He is the first cabinet secretary to fully embrace the issue.

Asked about this summer's passage of marriage equality in New York, Donovan said, "I was enormously proud to be a New Yorker on the day that it passed. I actually worked for Andrew Cuomo when he was Housing Secretary. I worked for Mike Bloomberg who has been a constant supporter of the law – what is now law."

Donovan also said in the interview with regard to marriage equality "We've got more work to do in the Obama administration in a second term." Asked if that included marriage equality, Donovan confirmed it did, saying, "Like marriage equality."

Donovan is the first cabinet secretary in the Obama administration to support marriage equality, despite the fact that his boss, President Obama, does not. Obama supports civil unions for same-sex couples and says he is "evolving" on the issue. Although he maintains that the Defense of Marriage Act is unconstitutional and his administration has stopped defending it in court, Obama has faced criticism from some LGBT advocates and supporters for not supporting marriage equality.



Starting at sunset Nov. 20, Transgender Day of Remembrance was observed on the front steps of the Capitol building. TransCentralPA was joined by Equality Pennsylvania, the LGBT Center, PA Coalition Against Rape, and PA Coalition Against Domestic Violence.

Bangor School Reverses Direction on Permission Slips

Bangor Area School Board Oct. 24 reversed direction on earlier board plans to require a student-run group to change its proposed name from the "Gay Straight Alliance" to the "Safe School Club". Under first discussions, student would also have been required to obtain permission slips from their parents in order to participate.

Equality Pennsylvania president, Adrian Shanker, attended the Oct. 24 in an effort to persuade its members to support the rights of LGBT students in the district.

"Thousands of school districts across the nation have had GSA's in their schools for more than a decade." Shanker said, an Allentown resident who founded a GSA in his Westchester, New York High School in 2003.

"Bangor has been behind the times, and I am pleased that they have recognized that they are not permitted to stop LGBT students from meeting on campus. I am even more pleased that they have moved away from their previous decision to alter the student's chosen club name and require parental permission slips."

Under the federal Equal Access Act, public schools may not deny the ability of a Gay Straight Alliance to form if the school allows other extra-curricular student organizations to meet, which Bangor does. However, last week, board members discussed the possibility of requiring parental permission slips in order for students to attend. Some board members also suggested that the student's name of "Gay Straight Alliance" should be altered to the "Safe School Club," which Equality Pennsylvania opposes.

"The notion that students need permission slips to attend a gay-straight alliance meeting ignores the harsh realities that LGBT students often don't have support systems in place in their homes. In many schools, their GSA is the only refuge from anti-gay family members. Requiring permission slips is not only unnecessary, it puts LGBT youth at great risk" Shanker said.

James Buro, a graduate of Bangor High School also attended the meeting and commented, "Had a GSA existed when I was a student, I would have had much-needed peer support. But if I needed to get a permission slip to attend, I likely would have opted against it."

Info: www.equalitypa.org

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BlogWatch

By Greg King

The Art & Science of GOP Art & Science

Lately I've gotten caught up in a number of blogs related to art. I am particularly fond of "Outsider Art," a term that was originally coined to describe art that depicts unconventional ideas, fantasy worlds and even art created by patients in insane asylums in the 1920's. Today the term is often used to broadly include anything created by untrained artists who are working outside the mainstream.

I personally like that much outsider art makes use of unconventional media and methods, sometimes combined in very creative ways with conventional media to create really interesting art. I find it quite amusing to ponder the meaning of these pieces, and perhaps even more amusing to realize, as is often the case with outsider art, that any meaning imparted by the viewer is little more than an elaborately created farce derived from something that is nothing more than raw creativity. I really enjoy that much art, not just outsider art, can have different meaning for everyone even though, in some cases, the artist's only intent to stimulate emotion in the viewer or perhaps free something from their own psyche.

There's also another art form on my favorite blogs hat has caught my interest lately. It's an art that seems most popular among theocrats, fundamentalists and the GOP – the artful interpretation of science. It too stimulates emotion and I can only imagine requires a certain disconnect within the artist's psyche. Here are a few of my favorite examples.

Michele Bachmann on Evolution – "And if you look at scientists there is not a unanimity of agreement on the origins of life. … Why would we forestall any particular theory? Because I don't think that even evolutionists, by and large, would say that this is proven fact. They say that this is a theory, as well as intelligent design. So I think the best thing to do is to let all scientific facts on the table, and let students decide." Nov. 30, 2011 - education forum at the University of Northern Iowa

Rick Perry on Climate Change - "The science is not settled on this. The idea that we would put Americans' economy at jeopardy based on scientific theory that's not settled yet to me is just nonsense. Just because you have a group of scientists who stood up and said, 'Here is the fact.' Galileo got outvoted for a spell." Sept. 7, 2011 - GOP Debate at the Reagan Library

Rick Perry on Evolution - "How old do I think the earth is? You know what, I don't have any idea. I know it's pretty old so it goes back a long, long way. I'm not sure anybody actually knows completely and absolutely how long, how old the earth is." Perry regards evolution as "a theory that's out there" and one that's "got some gaps in it." Aug, 18, 2011 - during a campaign stop in New Hampshire

Herman Cain on Sexual Identity Being a Choice - "Well, you show me the science that it's not and I'll be persuaded. Right now it's my opinion against the opinions of others who feel differently. That's just a difference of opinions. " Oct. 4, 2011 - The View

Herman Cain on Climate Change – "Manmade global warming is poppycock." and "No! This manmade global warming is not a crisis." June 14, 2011 – The Mark Levin Show

Ron Paul on Evolution - "I think it's a theory." He continued, "the theory of evolution and I don't accept it as a theory." 2007 Campaign Rally

Mitt Romney on Climate Change – Romney has made comments clearly supporting the science that man-made climate change is a real concern but has recently moderated his position in a statement that he thinks the world is getting hotter, but "I don't know that" and "I don't know if it's mostly caused by humans."

And this is only the beginning of my list of favorite GOP "art." I didn't even mention Sarah Palin or Rick Santorum. I intentionally included only science-related "art" and resisted, at great effort, including the artful manipulation of historical facts and other non-science based "art." Let's all make a resolution for 2012 to not be blinded by GOP "art."

Lancaster events

Bird-in-Hand Farmers Market
2710 Old Philadelphia Pike (Rt. 340), Bird-in-Hand, PA 17505, 717-393-9674

30 standholders offer delicious selections of fresh-from-the-farm fruits and vegetables, meats and cheeses, jams and jellies, health foods, fresh baked goods, candy, homemade fudge, homemade Good 'N Plenty ice cream, canned goods, quilts and handcrafts, and more. Plus, glassware, books, clothing outlets, and locally-made furniture. A delightful country shopping experience!

Dutch Haven
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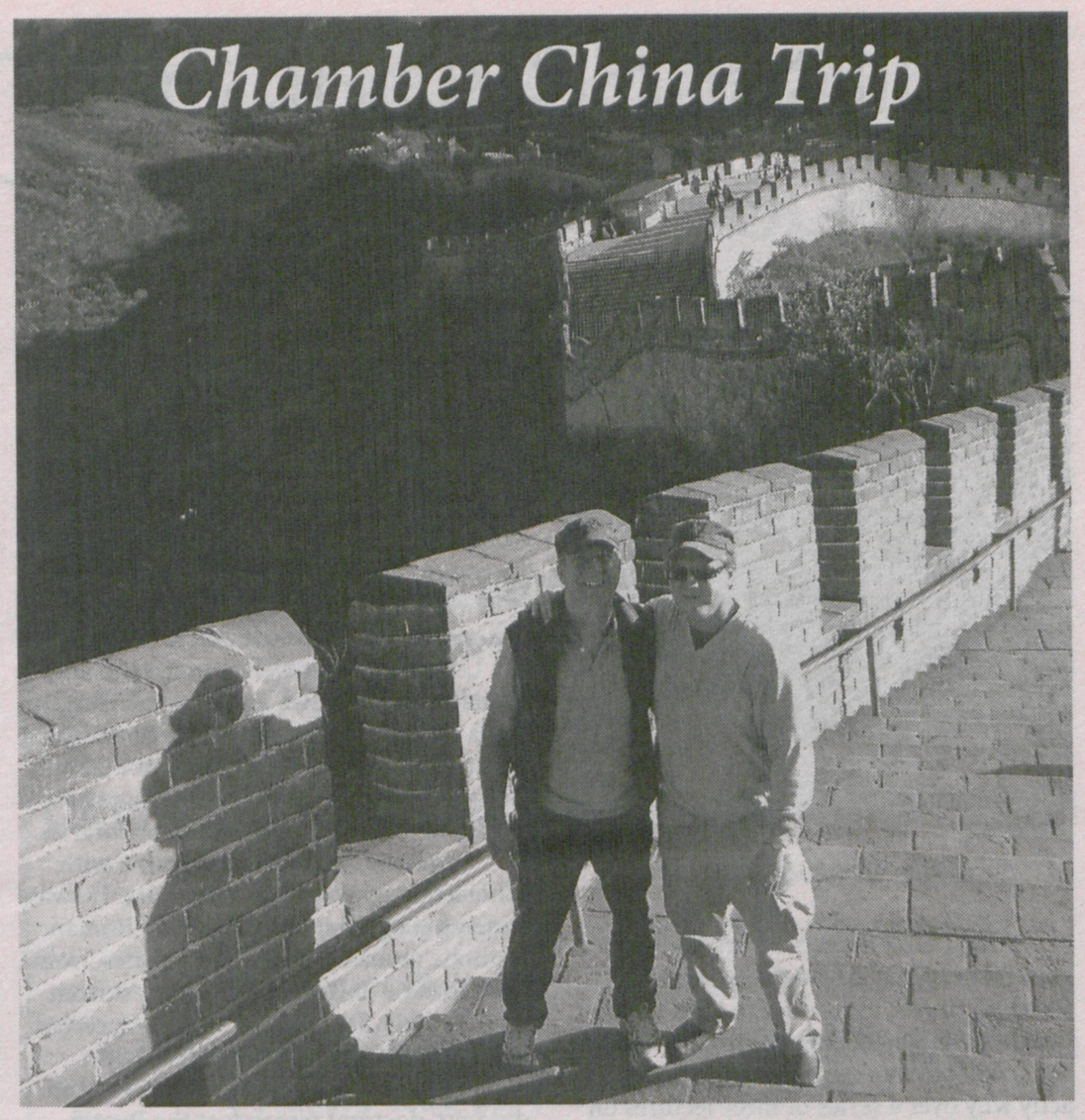
Chamber China Trip



Bill Krenz and Ben Dunlap, shown here at The Great Wall of China, recently spent eight days in China on a trip sponsored by the Harrisburg Regional Chamber in conjunction with the Central Pennsylvania Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce. The trip included Beijing, Shanghai, Shuzhou, and Hangzhou and visits to The Great Wall, the Forbidden City and Tiananmen Square.

Sometimes It's Nice To Talk With Someone Who Just "Gets" You For Who You Are.

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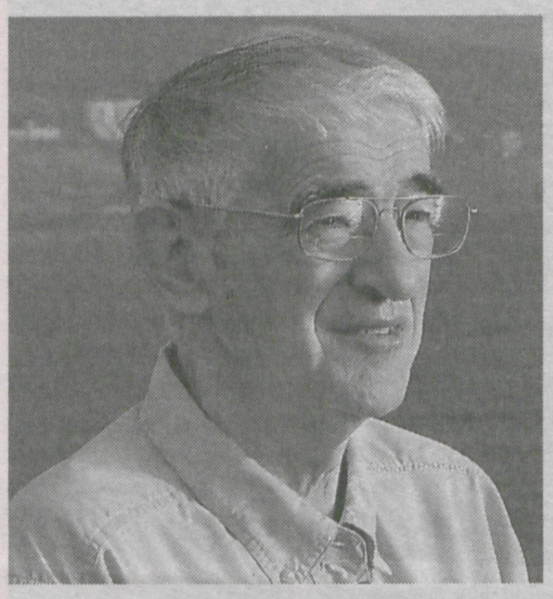
Biblical Scholar John Dominic Crossan to Speak at Lebanon Valley College



John Dominic Crossan

The Lord's Prayer is Christianity's greatest prayer. It is also Christianity's strangest prayer, according to John Dominic Crossan. Residents of central Pennsylvania will have an opportunity to learn exactly why over a series of three lectures on Wednesday, March 14, 7 p.m. and Thursday March 15, 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. at Miller Chapel on the Lebanon Valley College campus.

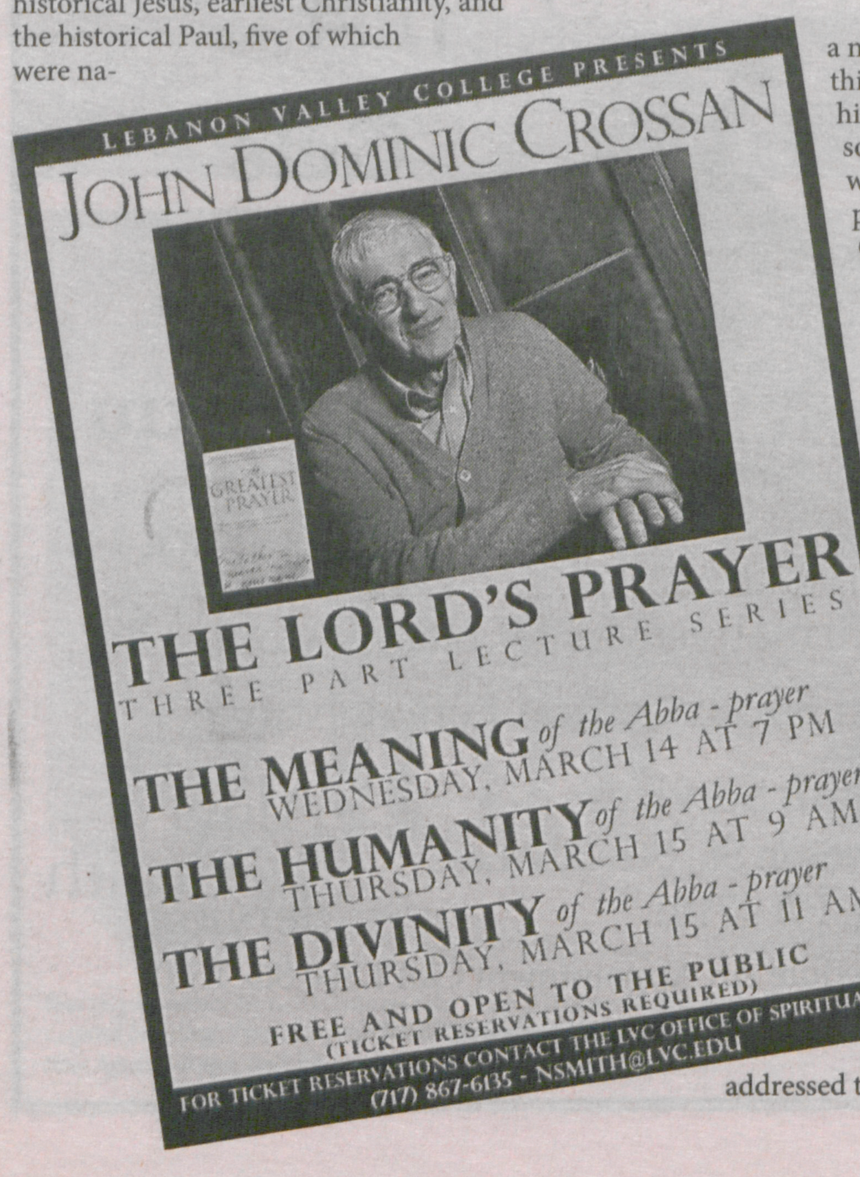
Crossan will lecture on his most recent book, The Greatest Prayer: Rediscovering the Revolutionary Message of the Lord's Prayer. Each of the three lectures will have a distinct focus: the meaning of the prayer, the humanity of the prayer, and the divinity of the prayer.

This book on the Lord's Prayer is just the most recent of dozens. Over the last forty years, the accomplished Biblical scholar has written twenty-five books on the historical Jesus, earliest Christianity, and the historical Paul, five of which were national religious bestsellers. Crossan is most well known for his work on researching the historical Jesus. Notably, Crossan was the co-chair of the Jesus Seminar from 1985 to 1996, which met in twice-annual meetings to debate the historical accuracy of the life of Jesus in the gospels. Most recently he was elected President of the Society of Biblical Literature for 2011-2012.

Besides authoring books, Crossan has lectured to hundreds of audiences across the United States as well as in Ireland and England, Scandinavia and Finland, Australia and New Zealand, Brazil, Japan, and South Africa. He has been interviewed on radio stations, prime time television networks, and cable television documentaries.

Crossan's resume is extensive, with scholarship spanning over 60 years. He was a member of a thirteenth-century Roman Catholic monastic order, the Servites, from 1950 to 1969 and an ordained priest from 1957 to 1969. During that time he received a Doctor of Divinity from St. Patrick's College in Maynooth, Ireland in 1959 and did post-doctoral research at the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome from 1959 to 1961 and at the École Biblique in Jerusalem from 1965 to 1967. Crossan resigned from the priesthood in 1969 and became an Emaritus Professor of Religious Studies at DePaul University in Chicago. He remained there until 1995.

Crossan has also been the recipient of many awards, including awards for scholarly excellence from the American Academy of Religion in 1989, DePaul University in 1991 and 1995, and an honorary doctorate from Stetson University, DeLand, Florida, in 2003.



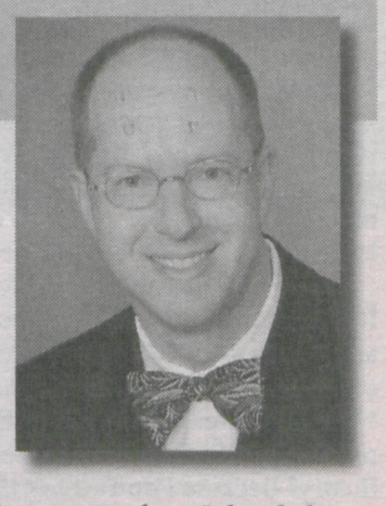
Crossan brings a new perspective to this age-old prayer; his lecture series is something you do not want to miss. In the prologue to his book, Crossan writes, "What if the Lord's Prayer is neither a Jewish prayer for Jews nor yet a Christian prayer for Christians? What if it is – as this book suggests – a prayer from the heart of Judaism on the Matthew Christianity for the conscience of the world? What if it is – as this book suggests – a radical manifesto and a hymn of hope for all humanity in language addressed to all the earth?"

For the answers to these questions, come and hear Crossan speak at Lebanon Valley College on March 14th at 7 p.m. and March 15th at 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. The lectures are free and open to the public, but require ticket reservations as there is limited space.

For free ticket reservations contact the LVC Office of Spiritual Life at (717) 867-6135 or email nsmith@lvc.edu.

legal column

By Leo L. Dunn, Attorney at Law



Estate Planning Basics Revisited

It's the start of another year and we are snuggled comfortably inside our homes relaxing and waiting for spring, except of course, for the snow bunnies that live for skiing. This is a good time to get caught up on doing the things we've put off – like getting our legal and retirement planning in place. I decided it was time to do another reminder article regarding the basic documents every individual should have in place by the time they reach age 40. Age 25 is better, but age 40 is when most people start accumulating wealth and needing to consider health issues for the long run.

Priority one: a living will/health care directive. This protects your decision making now, while you are still alive, in the event you have a medical emergency. It ensures that the person you want making decisions on your behalf is in control and cannot be 'shunted' aside by your next of kin. Remember, even though next of kin may be very supportive today, tomorrow may be different. It can also assure that your partner and friends have access to you if you are hospitalized. A good health care directive should have a section providing for disposition of remains and provisions regarding psychiatric care and who determines visitation access.

Priority two: a durable power of attorney. This also protects you now, while you are still alive. It ensures that the person you trust to handle your finances and day-to-day matters is responsible for them and empowered to perform tasks for you in the event you have an accident, or simply need to be away for an extended period due to your employment. It should always include a provision requesting the court to select your agent as guardian in the event you need one appointed.

Priority three: a last will and testament. This protects your intended beneficiaries after you die. It ensures that your assets go to the person(s) or organization(s) you want to enrich after you die. More importantly, in the case of an unmarried couple (and remember Pennsylvania law does not currently recognize your New York or D.C. marriage), it makes sure that a house owned in one person's name but paid for by both goes to the other partner after death of the first. It also assures that said partner's family can't talk you into going for a walk on the beach after the funeral and having all the locks changed as you are strolling along in grief. This actually happened in Florida a few years ago.

Priority four: a HIPAA waiver. Closely associated with priority one, a living will, this allows the person you designate (usually your health care agent) to have access to your medical records if needed in order to make medical decisions for you. This power is implied in your living will/health care directive, but this document expressly provides the power.

Priority five: health care and insurance. Make sure you are covered by a good health insurance plan, an adequate life insurance policy, and if you are over 45, long term care insurance. Then make sure you are up to date on your health checkups, especially cancer screenings.

Priority six: pension and savings. Review what your expected retirement income would be if you were to retire at 65 and your income stayed the same as it is now. Given your projected pension, 401(k), savings, and social security incomes will you be able to afford your current lifestyle. If not, start changing savings and spending habits now. Do not count on a higher income. If your income goes up later, recalculate then. Right now you should focus on planning for being able to enjoy your retirement.

Of course, to truly protect yourself and your loved ones, you may need additional documents: a cohabitation agreement, guardianship, trust, new deed, and business transferal contract or business succession plan. That's why you should sit down with an attorney and go over your individual needs. They probably won't be the same as your friend, Jake, who did everything himself. Besides you want to make this easier, not harder, for yourself and your loved ones.

Leo Dunn is an attorney and counselor-at-law practicing in Harrisburg area with a focus on the estate planning needs of the GLBT community. He may be reached at leo@leodunnlaw.com or 717-503-1207.

FAB Award Winners Honored

Nearly 300 people filled the ball room at Lancaster's Convention Center for FAB, a fundraising event of The LGBT Community Center Coalition. Lancaster Mayor Rick Gray and his wife served as honorary Co-chairs in recognition of their strong support of the LGBT community. In April 2011, Mayor Gray announced a policy extending health and other benefits to same-sex domestic partners of Lancaster city employees. Referencing the city's stated commitments to diversity, equality, and fairness, Gray called the policy "the right and fair thing to do." The policy allows city employees to seek the same health care and other employment benefits for their same-sex partners that have been available to employees and retirees with spouses. Mayor Gray was sworn in for his first term as mayor of Lancaster in 2006, and was re-elected for a second term in 2009.

Chris Dietz

Since 2006, Dietz has served on Millersburg Borough Council and currently serves as President. He is one of only a handful of openly gay legislators throughout the state.

A mechanical engineer by trade, he is actively involved in the Capital Region Stonewall Democrats, the Dauphin County Democratic Committee, and serves on the Board of Directors of MCC of the Spirit.

FAB Award Winner Chris Dietz

For five years, Dietz has steered the Tour de Millersburg, a cycling race that has raised over $25,000 for local non profits. In the Millersburg community, Chris and his fiancé, Alex Reber, live openly, invested in the community around them.

While many young LGBT people with political aspirations feel they need to move to a big city, Dietz lives his values by representing his friends and neighbors in Millersburg.

Debbie Gable

Gable is one of York County's most fervent supporters of LGBT issues. She comes from a place of respect for everyone, which she lives day in and day out.

FAB Award Winner Debbie Gable

Through Planned Parenthood of Central Pennsylvania, she created an LGBTQA youth program in York, The Curve, which celebrated its fifth anniversary this year. In addition, Gable provides professional training on LGBT issues to educational, medical and social service professionals.

Dedicated to offering support to our community, Gable serves on the board of the Central Pennsylvania Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce, partners with the York County Council of Churches on Remembering with Red Ribbon, an AIDS Awareness event; serves on the LGBT Community Center Coalition's GSA Leadership Summit committee; and collaborates with Family First Health (FFH), a federally-qualified health center to deliver HIV prevention services to individuals living with HIV.

Dan Miller

Miller has long been a champion for those who suffer from discrimination, a strong advocate for equal rights, and a civic servant of the city of Harrisburg.

After several attacks on homosexuals in the summer of 1990, Miller publicly called for better police protection and was subsequently fired by his employer for being gay. Beginning in late 1980's, he worked closely with Representative Babette Joseph and a network of organizations to pass a Hate Crimes Bill and in doing so, organized the Pennsylvania Justice Campaign.

FAB Award Winner Dan Miller

Miller served as co-chair of the Gay and Lesbian Switchboard, worked as a "Buddy" with SCAAN (South Central AIDS Assistance Network), founded the Business Association of Gays and Lesbians (BAGAL), and helped create the first public and open Gay and Lesbian Pride Festival of Central Pennsylvania.

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- Marilyn Monroe

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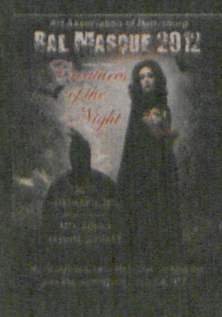

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Senior Happy Hour at Brownstone

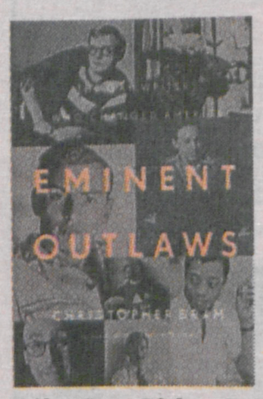
A happy hour at Brownstone Café was recently organized by the Central PA LGBT Aging Network (CPLAN), affiliated with The LGBT Community Center. The group's mission is to promote a positive and healthy environment for lgbt elderly. About 12 attended the event. CPLAN is mounting a monthly slate of events and activities to bring increased awareness around lgbt senior issues. Temple MSW candidate and center intern Donald Anklam has recently been spearheading the CPLAN effort. He is known to the region from his recent role as Central PA Pride Festival's vice-president and fundraising chair.

book review

By Lewis Maurer
Dauphin County Library System

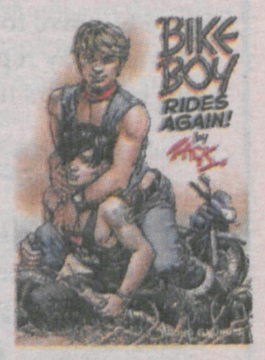
Coming Early 2012

Here's a sample of the eclectic mix of LGBT titles headed our way in 2012.



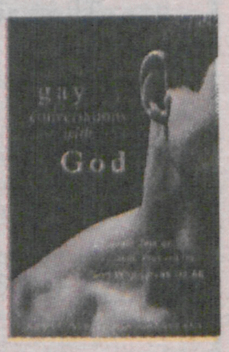
Eminent Outlaws: The Gay Writers Who Changed America
Christopher Bram (Feb 2, 2012)
In the years following World War II, a small group of gay writers established themselves as literary power players, fueling cultural changes that would resonate for decades to come, and transforming the American literary landscape forever… from a time when being a homosexual was a crime in forty-nine states and into an age of same-sex marriage and the end of Don't Ask, Don't Tell.

Bike Boy Rides Again (Bruno Gmunder Verlag)
Zack (Mar 2012)
In the 70s his lustful and imaginative work was published in many gay magazines. Last year Bruno Gmunder released Bike Boy, a collection of extensively re-colored stories, which became a bestseller right away. With Bike Boy Rides Again he once again gives us a masterfully drawn and stunning new volume of sexy and randy adventures.



Tom of Finland - Life and Work of a Gay Hero
F. Valentine Hooven (Mar 2012)
This anthology is dedicated to Tom of Finland's body of work from its early beginnings to the last years. With many drawings, a lot of photos and an extensive biography it gives you a portrait of this unique artist, which is as many-sided and life-embracing as the artist himself.

Gay Conversations with God: Straight Talk on Fanatics, Fags and the God Who Loves Us All
James Alexander Langteaux (Apr 1, 2012)
Unorthodox in its presentation, this guide speaks the language of those who may feel abandoned, condemned, and damned while avoiding reinterpretations of scriptural passages, making the gospel accessible to a younger, free-spirited generation. Spearheading a volatile topic with candor and grace, it reframes the never-ending question, is homosexuality a sin and instead asks the gay community for a cease-fire—to forgive, love, and help put a stop to a cultural war being waged in the world.



thinking out loud

By Abby Dees

As positive images of LGBT people become ordinary and expected, columnist Abby Dees looks at how old, negative images of LGBT people might still be keeping us quiet about injustice.

Am I post-gay yet? Or am I just overcompensating for old gay stereotypes?

Have you become complacent about being gay? I have. As LGBT rights evolve, and LGBT life becomes more normalized to mainstream America, some of us have the good fortune to be blasé about being gay. It's a normal response to progress, but there might be something else going on as well: overcompensation.

I live in a liberal neighborhood in Los Angeles, and except when I have a deadline for one of these columns looming, I do not think about being a lesbian. At no point in my day do I stop and think, "Oh, wait, I'm a lesbian – what's our special gay laundry technique again? Despite what my straight guy friends hope, when I kiss my partner at the end of the workday, I do not think, "Let's have a hot lesbian kiss now before we make dinner." My lesbian life is boring, maybe even a let down. This is probably as it should be.

By contrast, though, many of my straight friends (who I don't mean to keep maligning, really) think that I'm all-gay-all-the-time and perhaps oversensitive to the subject. I've written a book about communicating with your LGBT loved one, I've got this here column, and I am prone to screaming in a tic-like fashion at the TV when sweet-faced TV preachers say that God loves all his children, but probably loves straight people a little more. I get how this looks to my friends.

But I don't really put that much energy out in a specifically gay-ish fashion. In fact, I probably babble on way more about a greater passion in my life: the Beatles, though one seems to think I'm oversensitive about John Lennon. So, even with people I care about, I find myself downplaying my already mild support for my own community. I confess that I worry my friends will say, "Oh, she's off again," just because I have to point out that however much you might like Rick Santorum's economic ideas, he actually used the words "man on dog" to explain his opposition to same-sex marriage.

I know why I'm biting my lip: I'm showing that I don't have a chip on my shoulder, that my lesbian identity is a joy-joy modern thing. I worry that if I make too many comments about injustice against LGBT people, people will think I'm – yes – an angry, miserable lesbian. I know better, but it's an old, deep reflex against an old image that hovers around whenever I have a moment of righteous anger or am feeling emphatic. I see it there, in its mannish gray suit and severe hair-do, but others may not.

If you are too young to know what I'm talking about, first, let me say how happy that makes me. Second, it's time for a LGBT history refresher. Please stop everything now and read Vito Russo's seminal The Celluloid Closet (or stream the movie). When I came out in the 80s, I was only too familiar with the persistent message in the media that Russo so beautifully exposed: that all LGBT people were suicidal, homicidal, mistaken, or – in a strangely repetitive trope – vampires, before they got all cuddly. In movies from Basic Instinct, to Personal Best, to The Hunger, there wasn't a feel-good lesbian character to be found. This was so routine that when the sweetly positive lesbian flick, Desert Hearts, came out in 1985 in L.A., every lesbian I'd ever met was in that ticket line opening day, it was so exciting. The audience erupted when the film's lesbian ingénue arrived on the screen, defiant and joyful, driving backwards at 60 miles an hour in her convertible.

Now that we are moving quickly into no-big-deal-land, I sometimes feel like it's my job to be the model post-liberation lesbian, to treat this recent history as quaint and silly – which is a mistake. Last month a 17-year-old boy was shoved and taunted in Tennessee for wearing a GSA t-shirt at his school – his principal reportedly egged his tormentors on. That same week 14-year-old Jamey Rodemeyer killed himself in Buffalo, New York after relentless bullying. Those old images are still around, giving permission to violence and stupidity. We're not post-anything yet.

Abby Dees is a civil rights attorney-turned-author who has been in the LGBT rights trenches for 25+ years.

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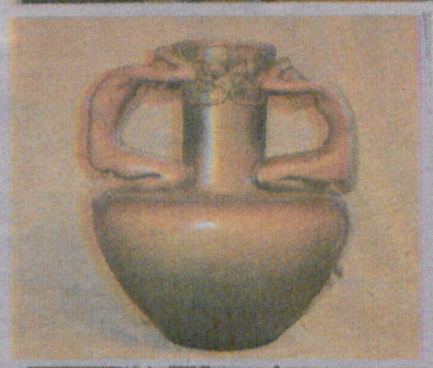

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Keystone Conference March 28-31 Calls for Workshops

The fourth annual Keystone Conference, "A Celebration of Gender Diversity", again takes place at the Sheraton Harrisburg/Hershey Hotel March 28-31.

The event is now accepting proposals for workshops and seminars for a variety of topics that will appeal to transgender individuals, their families, friends and allies. Keystone 2011 received over 350 attendees that came from the entire spectrum of the gender community, their supporters and those that serve them professionally--including physicians, psychologists, counselors, and educators. Our attendees ranged in age from six to eighty-seven!

The mission of our workshop program is to encourage attendees to fully embrace the unique diversity and gifts of transgender people and to help them find acceptance and success in their lives. If you are interested in being a participant of the 2012 Keystone Conference, please click on the link below. We begin scheduling presenters and workshops in mid-December and expect to have the schedule complete by February.

Please understand that we have a limited number of seminar rooms and must consider the relevance of the topic, the diversity of the subject matter and the appeal of it to the attendees of the conference. Last year we turned away over half the applications we received, so the earlier you submit your proposal, the greater your possibility of having it accepted.

Info: www.Keystone-Conference.org

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IDentityTheft SHIELD

LGBT health

By Cassandra Weber, CRNP
Alder Health Services

Do You Know Your Risk Factors?

The holiday season has passed and I sincerely hope you have enjoyed time with family and friends and had a safe and healthy holiday season.

As the new year begins, we often make resolutions to lose weight, quit smoking, spend less money, spend more time with family, and so on. How do we decide what our resolution will be and how long will our resolutions last? We know that smoking and being overweight are unhealthy, but what other health risks do you face as an individual, and did you know that the LGBT community faces unique health risks and health disparities?

Alder Health Services

According to the Gay and Lesbian Medical Association's companion document to Healthy People 2010, areas of concern for the LGBT community include HIV/AIDS, Sexually Transmitted Infections (diseases), Immunizations and Infectious Diseases, Health Communication and Education, Access to Quality Health Services, Mental Health and Mental Disorders, Substance Abuse and Tobacco, and Cancer. For example, lesbian women are the highest subgroup of women at risk for breast cancer but often do not perform self-breast exams or get routine health screenings or even know they are at higher risk.

I have the privilege of writing a regular column addressing LGBT health with the goal of increasing awareness of the unique risks and decreasing the health disparities faced by the LGBT community. To meet this goal each column will focus on various health topics, but this column will start by addressing health communication and education. One of the best places to start increasing awareness of your own health risks is to think about your relationship with your health care provider. Are you able to openly talk with your provider about your health and your unique health needs as a whole person? Unfortunately, many members of the LGBT community have had negative experiences with health care providers and do not feel comfortable discussing their sexual orientation or gender identity with their provider. However, because the LGBT community does have unique health risks and needs that communication needs to be open and honest to give you the best possible health care.

If you don't feel comfortable it may be time to find a provider you do feel comfortable with. Everyone, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, deserves quality and compassionate health care and your health is worth finding the right provider for you. Ask friends and family, look at resources such as the provider listing offered on the Gay and Lesbian Medial Association website, or you can even call offices and ask if they have a non-discrimination policy that includes sexual orientation and gender identity.

Second, familiarize yourself with the unique health needs specific to you. The Gay and Lesbian Medical Association has developed top ten lists of health issues to discuss with providers for transgendered people, lesbian and bisexual women, and gay and bisexual men. The top ten health issues for transgendered people include access to health care, openly sharing your health history, hormones, cardiovascular health, cancer, sexually transmitted infections (diseases) and safe sex, alcohol and tobacco, depression and anxiety, injectable silicone, and fitness. For lesbian and bisexual women the list includes breast cancer, depression and anxiety, heart health, gynecological cancers, fitness, tobacco, alcohol, substance use, domestic violence and osteoporosis. For gay and bisexual men the list includes HIV/AIDS and safe sex, substance use, depression and anxiety, hepatitis immunizations, sexually transmitted infections (diseases), cancer, alcohol, tobacco, diet and exercise, and anal papilloma.

As you educate yourself about your own health, be sure you are looking at good information. The internet is a quick and easy place to find a wealth of information on many topics, however not all information on the internet is accurate. Health information from government sources, large medical organization such as the American Heart Association, and universities all have information which has been reviewed and validated. If in doubt of the reliability of the information you are finding, take it to your health care provider to discuss.

So of all the resolutions to make this year, think about making your relationship with your health provider and increasing your health awareness one of them. You deserve culturally competent, quality health care regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.

Cassandra Weber is a certified registered nurse practitioner at south central Pennsylvania's Alder Health Services, which specializes in meeting the unique needs of individuals living with HIV/AIDS, the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community, and individuals who are struggling with addiction. Alder Health now offers LGBT primary medical care.

Ex-gay Triumph or Folly?

By Rob Tish

Where'd all the homos go?

The National Organization for Marriage is trumpeting a new survey about changing your sexual orientation, according to JustWakingUp.com. The survey is based on "religiously-mediated" involvement in Christian conversion ministries.

A summary of the findings –

98	The number of subjects when the study began: 72 men and 26 women.
37	The number of subjects who dropped out of the study and did not report their results. I don't think we can count any of them as an ex-gay "win."
12	The number who stopped trying to change, and embraced their gay identity.
18	The number who were reportedly chaste, "with substantive dis-identification with homosexual orientation." In other words, they've managed to stop having sex, and don't think about getting same-sex down-and-dirty as much as they used to. This isn't a change in orientation, any more than a straight person is no longer straight because they've used prayer to become celibate and partially push some of their sexual feelings underground.
17	The number who apparently stayed with the study, but whose outcomes are not described in the summary. Presumably, they're not clear ex-gay "wins" either.
14	The number who reported "successful 'conversion' to heterosexual orientation and functioning."

That's a meager 14% success rate. Or is it? Let's learn more about those 14 people.

First, it's probably not 14. The study cautions us that the 14 conversions and 18 celibates represent "likely overly optimistic projections of anticipated success." In other words — less than 14 actual conversions.

But wait. Check out what "conversion" means:

Most of the individuals who reported that they were heterosexual at Time 3 did not report themselves to be without experience of homosexual arousal, and did not report heterosexual orientation to be unequivocal and uncomplicated.

You know what they call straight people who experience homosexual arousal, and whose orientation is at most equivocal? Bisexual. Most of the 14 heterosexual "conversions" seem to be bisexuals. This leaves us with at most — at most — six individuals who went from gay to straight (as of now, at least; who knows where they'll be in another seven years).

And the authors aren't willing to go even that far. Their single-sentence summary:

In short, the results do not prove that categorical change in sexual orientation is possible for everyone or anyone, but rather meaningful shifts along a continuum that constitute real changes appear possible for some.

Wow. Out of 98 highly-motivated subjects, the authors found that a small, unspecified number can use prayer and counseling to shut down their sexual feelings or become a bit more bisexual. And there were possibly none who turned straight.

The authors claim their results: "…challenge the commonly expressed views of the mental health establishment that change of sexual orientation is impossible or very uncommon…" Actually, it looks more like the results confirm those views. If the antigay camp sees this as vindication and victory, they must be even more desperate than I thought.

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thecentralvoice.ning.com

making sense of life

By Dr. Terry Drew Karanen

Forgiving the Unforgiveable

Many people have told me, "I just can't forgive him. Besides, he doesn't deserve my forgiveness." If this sounds familiar consider this: You may not think they deserve your forgiveness, but you deserve the benefits that come from doing so. Let's look at why that is true.

Forgiveness is an act of surrender, not to the person who has harmed us, but to the process of healing. As long as we are struggling with the pain and the hurt we are like a scuba diver in seaweed. The more we struggle the more tangled up we become.

Thinking about the same thing over and over causes that event to become a concrete part of our life. If we have gone through a horrible experience it is important to recognize that fact. But repeatedly recalling pain caused by others only increases our distress and does little to heal our suffering. Soon the emotional pain becomes physical illness. None of this agony is felt by the other person. If this is true the question arises: Am I really willing to be sick or even die over this?

There are those who would answer "yes" to that question. Some might feel that their illness or death will finally make that other person see the light. The victim thinks they get to be right, which makes the other person wrong. Is this the case?

Don't count on it. Most of the time the other person couldn't care less and the only one we end up hurting is ourselves. We may have every possible reason to be angry about what someone else has done, but it behooves us to ask, "Do I want to be right or do I want to be happy?"

Yes, I know that we want both, to be right and to be happy. But, that isn't always possible. We need not prove to others that we were right at the expense of our own happiness and well-being. When we hold onto old hurts and disappointments we are keeping someone in our consciousness and current life who may not need to be there. Refusing to grant forgiveness is creating a link to them that will only get stronger, more harmful and possibly lethal.

Refusing to forgive is also giving the other person power over us. No one can take away our right to feel any way we want, unless we allow someone that power over us. It was Eleanor Roosevelt who reminded us, "No one can make you feel inferior without your consent." Do we really want to consent to that? When we refuse to forgive that is exactly what we are doing.

Forgiveness is the only option to the elimination of pain and future injury. How would it feel not to carry around this burden anymore? Haven't you suffered long enough and aren't you willing to try something else? Through forgiveness we become whole. Forgiveness is the path out of the past pain into the present love. Forgiveness moves us from judgment to understanding.

The process of forgiving begins with the willingness to let go of the situation. It happens when we come to the healthy realization that holding onto the pain is worse than the pain of letting go. It involves loss – the loss of the drama, the hurt and the story that we've been telling ourselves and others for weeks, months or even years.

How do we know when we have really forgiven someone? One way we can measure success is when we can wish the other person well. Only the brave forgive. The coward never forgives – it is not in their nature. It takes a strong, brave person to stop allowing the past to cause pain in the present and ruin the future. To forgive, which means "to give forth," allows an exchange of energy in a way that creates the healing, even if we are no longer in contact with the person who wronged us.

Is there someone in your life for whom you hold a grudge? Be willing to move forward in life to a place that is more comfortable through forgiveness. Doing so allows us to take control of our own happiness and lets others take responsibility for themselves.

To contact Dr. Terry or find out more about his center, email him at terry@newthoughtpa.org or www.newthoughtpa.org

Church Receives Charter as Center for Spiritual Living

Rev. Dr. Terry Drew Karanen recently announced the chartering of the only church of its kind in region, the Center for Spiritual Living Cumberland Valley. The center is organized as a non-profit corporation.

The church is chartered by Centers for Spiritual Living, an organization of spiritual communities that honors all paths to God and helps individuals develop a personal relationship with God," Karanen said.

"When God is the focus of our spirituality, then other areas of our lives fall into place—we are happier, we can do more for others, be better stewards of the Earth, and help bring peace and harmony to the world," Karanen said, explaining the focus of his center.

Dr. Karanen will serve as the spiritual director and pastor of the new church. He can currently be heard at Unity of Harrisburg on Sundays at 10 a.m. through Jan. 29.

What Is a Healthy Relationship Anyway? What about HIV?

Ever wonder what in the world a healthy relationship is? What happens when you add HIV infection to the mix? Where do you turn for help?

There's a group for that. Alder Health Services offers Healthy Relationships.

Here's what goes on:

1. Introduce disclosure to friends and family.
2. Identify and discuss stress around choosing to disclose or not disclose to friends and family.
3. Introduce disclosure to different types of sex partners.
4. Identify and discuss stress around choosing to disclose or not disclose to sex partners.
5. Learn the 5 coping skills, and apply them through role play of movie quality clips.
6. Learn safer sex methods, and how to negotiate them.
7. Build healthier relationships, by improving communication techniques.

This is NOT a workshop that encourages or pushes its participants to disclose. Instead, the workshop focuses on using the coping skills so that participants can develop their own individualized plan for stress and risk reduction. Healthy Relationships isn't lecture-style, it is participant-driven. It is a closed and confidential group. The groups can vary in terms of how often they meet, but usually they meet five times for two hours at a time.

The incentives are:

$5 gift card for every section of the workshop you complete (there are 5), and if you complete all five sections you get an additional $25 gift card. That brings the total up to $50 in gift cards.

Groups are separated by sexual orientation and gender and are led by Cindy Vicente and Terry Kurtz. Interested parties do NOT need to be a client of Alder Health Services to participate, the service would just need proof of an HIV diagnosis.

There's a workshop for heterosexual women in Harrisburg coming up on Jan. 15 and Jan. 23. For more information on upcoming groups, contact Cindy Vicente at 717-215-8437.

Chamber on the move

By Bill Krenz

CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA GAY AND LESBIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Chamber 5th Anniversary Annual Meeting Jan. 21

Jan. 21, the Central Pennsylvania Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce will celebrate its 5th Anniversary at its Annual Meeting & Dinner. The celebration will be held at the newly renovated Best Western Premier The Central Hotel & Conference Center and includes a reception and dinner followed by a presentation and keynote speaker, John J. 'SKI' Sygielski, newly-appointed president of Harrisburg Area Community College. The evening also includes a performance by nationally known comedian Suzanne Westenhoefer.

Sponsors are Lead Up, Highmark Blue Shield, The Gibson Luckenbill Group / RBC Wealth Management, Posh Studio and AideM Media.

For 2012, the chamber's website will undergo improvements, including registration and PayPal payment options, plus a new business calendar that allows chamber members to post business events.

Past Events

Members of the chamber attended the Fall Achievement Benefit Nov. 12 where the chamber was a Silver Sponsor. Debbie Gable, chamber board member, was recognized at FAB has an 'Honoree' for her work with Planned Parenthood of Central PA and THE Curve.

The Nov. 8 mixer featured a grand opening of a Members 1st Federal Credit Union branch office in Lancaster on Hempstead Road.

Dec. 8 chamber member Gregory Jordanoff, proprietor of Fete Events, hosted a holiday celebration at the Historic Harrisburg Association Building, where he showed showcased his talents and showmanship.

Future Events

Look for chamber's winter schedule on our web site. If you are interested in hosting a future event, we have a few spaces open in 2012. Please contact Deb McClain at dmclain@cpglcc.org for additional information.

Remember to RSVP for mixer events at www.cpglcc.org. The networking opportunities continue to be a great way to meet people and make connections.

Info: www.cpglcc.org

Veteran's Day Observed by Local Group

By Frank Pizzoli

> *"I've always played by the Don't Ask, Don't Tell rules, all nine years of my Air Force service. There was no reason for the police to inform the military about my personal life."*
> **Jene Newsome**

Nov. 11 members of the Armed Forces, both gay and straight, their allies, and Harrisburg's Jene Newsome gathered in the Capital to acknowledge contributions made by all members of the service branches in observance of Veteran's Day.

The event was organized by the Central PA LGBT Aging Network (CPLAN), affiliated with The LGBT Community Center and whose mission is to promote a positive and healthy environment for lgbt elderly. Equality PA's executive director Ted Martin served as master of ceremonies.

Silent Witness Peacekeeper volunteers attend the ceremony.

Newsome had been discharged in February 2010 under "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" but has since been reinstated. At the time, she told Central Voice "I've always played by the Don't Ask, Don't Tell rules, all nine years of my Air Force service. There was no reason for the police to inform the military about my personal life," referring to the fact that a legal issue with her partner lead police to their home where they observed, through a window, the couple's marriage license.

Harrisburg resident Jene Newsome, discharged under DADT, now reinstated.

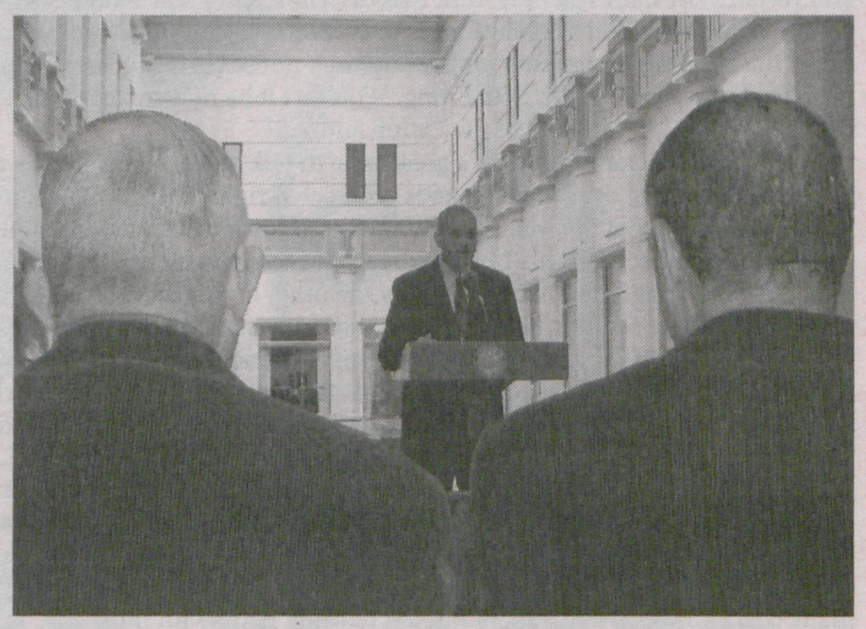
Coincidentally, the US Senate Judiciary Committee also on Nov. 11 voted to repeal the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), which redefined marriage for federal purposes to exclude same-sex unions that are valid under state law. Martin noted in his remarks that although DADT has been repealed, DOMA stands in glaring contradiction with the intent of DADT. For example, although DADT's repeal allows Newsome back into the armed services, there are, as of yet, no ways for her marriage to be recognized on par with heterosexual couples.

When her discharge troubles began, Newsome's service friends and family "were right there for me," she said. "They were accepting of my engagement and commitment ceremony," she said.

Acceptance has been a challenge for Danielle Finnegan, a member of the region's transgender community, served for 46 years in the service. She is also active with TransCentralPA, an organization that promotes education and understanding on transgender issues. Finnegan spoke with emotion about her near half century of service. "Transgender individuals have always served in the Armed Forces," she said.

A 20-year veteran, Capt. Esteban Diaz, who served 20 years in the Air Force, including service in Dessert Storm, Iraqi Freedom, and Enduring Freedom, told Central Voice "I know the military is more than capable of implementing DADT repeal and all that my mean to service members." He noted that military service is purely merit based and now "gay people can judged on merit" not sexuality.

CPLAN is mounting a monthly slate of events and activities to bring increased awareness around lgbt senior issues. Temple MSW candidate Donald Anklam has recently been spearheading the CPLAN effort. He is known to the region from his recent role as Central PA Pride Festival's vice-president and fundraising chair.


Post-DADT the military adjusts the Armed Forces to openly accommodating same-sex couples.

"We're planning something monthly for the community and actively working with organizations to raise awareness around lgbt issues," Anklam said. He is using a two-pronged approach: Real events for real people and real "product" oriented services so that, for example, nursing homes and senior agencies can best implement inclusive policies called for in upcoming implementation of the Affordable Care Act.

"By 2014, health care reform measures will be looking at ways organizations are responsive to lgbt needs," Anklam pointed out. LGBT needs are not special needs by any means Anklam stresses. "Asking that lgbt people be treated with dignity and respect isn't a special request."

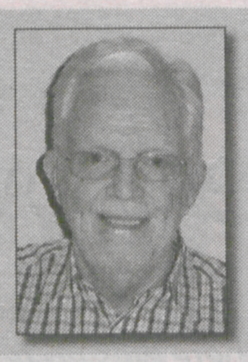
Left to right: Ted Martin, Equality PA; ally and 20-year veteran Capt. Esteban Diaz, longtime advocate Sharon Potter, Don Anklam, center intern; Maria Diaz, and Danielle Finnegan.

York events

Read, Touch & Discover - Legs, Legs and More Legs
Jan. 19, 10:30-11:30 a.m.
North Museum of Natural History & Science
400 College Ave., Lancaster, PA
Adults: $7.50; Jrs & Srs: $6.50; Planetarium: add"l $2.50
Explore your world! Using museum touchables and a different story each week, we"ll explore what we can learn about animals just from looking at their feet and legs. Read, Touch & Discover encourages young children, ages 3-6, to explore their world. An adult is required and older siblings are welcome. Info: Amanda Eckinger 717-291-3941; www.northmuseum.org

Evening Rendezvous: Native American Languages and Susquehanna Placenames
Jan. 27, 6 p.m.to 1 a.m., *Reservations required*
Shank's Mare
2092 Long Level Rd., Wrightsville
Members: $36 per person; Non-Members: $40 per person
Chip Kauffman will introduce you to an appreciation for the history, complexity and rich tapestry of American Indian languages and how they influenced American life and culture. Fee includes dinner and speaker. Liz Winand, 717-252-1616; www.shanksmare.com

Ally in the Academy



By Trum Simmons

2012 Was Good Year for Activism

Writing a bi-monthly column is an interesting challenge in many ways, but timeliness, trying to write about current events and societal trends that will be relevant when the issue comes out, is the big one. Keep in mind that the paper will be on the stands for two months. And as this writer looks at the two months you'll be reading this, there are several seasonal matters to be considered, e.g., New Year's resolutions, the President's State of the Union address, Black History Month and Valentine's Day.

As 2011 morphed into 2012, we continued to struggle with the same issues that have been in the news for the past several years, same-sex marriage being one of the biggies. Attempts to roll back recent advances continue in states like California and New Hampshire, and while I believe that the rollbacks will fail, it's still hard to listen to those who advocate a return to the good old days of discrimination against LGBTQ people.

The Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) still stands, and as activist James Hormel said recently, we can't rest easy until that discriminatory legislation is wiped off the books. So one of my New Year's resolutions is to continue to fight for ongoing education to counteract the specious arguments supporting such nonsense. Heterosexual marriage needs to be defended—you've got to be kidding. Wouldn't it be nice to hear a U.S. president call for the end of DOMA in a State of the Union address?

Black History Month is a great time to talk about Pennsylvania native Bayard Rustin, one of the most overlooked heroes of the civil rights and gay rights movements. Rustin, the chief organizer of the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom in 1963, during which Dr. King delivered his I have a dream speech, was an openly gay African-American man who was kept in the background by the other organizers of the march so that his sexual orientation wouldn't detract from the main message of the event.

Although King supported his friend, other colleagues such as NAACP leader Roy Wilkins argued that if Rustin were visible at the march, his arrest on morals charges when he was a young man would be fed to the national media and thus hurt the movement's efforts.

Remember that 1963 was not a good time for LGBTQ Americans. Even in the civil rights movement gays were vilified. The famous Harlem congressman Adam Clayton Powell Jr. was instrumental in getting Rustin removed from the board of the Southern Christian Leadership Council (SCLC) because he disapproved of his homosexuality, and many of the black power leaders wanted nothing to do with him.

Bayard Rustin kept fighting the good fight, and in the 1970s and '80s advocated strongly for gay rights. In 1986 he testified in favor of New York State legislation supporting gay rights. "The question of social change should be framed with the most vulnerable group in mind: gay people," he said.

Historian John D'Emilio's book about Rustin is titled "The Lost Prophet: The Life and Times of Bayard Rustin." We would do well to discover him in February, at least, for sure.

I hope it will be OK for me to end this piece with yet more thoughts on love, for Valentine's Day is something to be reckoned with. Thank God we have come a long way from the days of "the love that dare not speak its name," when wonderful people such as Oscar Wilde were not free to love whomever they wished and who paid a dear price for speaking radical thoughts.

At his trial in 1895 Wilde was asked to define the love that dare not speak its name, and among other things he said, "It is that deep, spiritual affection that is as pure as it is perfect.... It is beautiful, it is fine, it is the noblest form of affection. There is nothing unnatural about it."

In 2012 most LGBTQ people can celebrate Valentine's Day openly, and isn't that just the best? Of course there remains that nasty problem of DOMA and the fact that the same-sex marriage frontier has yet to be reached. But the annual Freedom to Marry rally in downtown Harrisburg is a joyous demonstration, and I plan to be there once again this year. How about joining me?

Trum Simmons is senior professor of English at Harrisburg Area Community College (HACC) and adviser of The Fourth Estate, the Harrisburg campus student newspaper. He also advises HACC Allies, the LGBTQA student organization.

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6 Projects Noted for Sustainable Development

Six development projects in the region were recently recognized with a Commonwealth Award, bestowed on economic development and private investment projects deemed sustainable and therefore "Smart Growth" projects.

A total of 16 projects across the state were recognized by 10,000 Friends of Pennsylvania who selected winners from various urban infill, historic preservation and rehabilitation, adaptive reuse, Brownfield redevelopment, traditional neighborhood development, public infrastructure, farmland preservation, and revitalization plans.

Smart Growth strategies include providing communities with more transportation options; more housing and recreational choices; commutes closer to job opportunities, shops, and schools, as well as improved energy efficiency, green space protection, and cleaner air and water.

The organization received a record number of submissions. "It's encouraging to see so many smart growth projects succeeding as many sectors of the construction industry are struggling to rebound," said Jack Machek, president/CEO, 10,000 Friends of Pennsylvania.

Awardees include:

CODO 28, York, received a Gold Award in the Mixed-Use Development (Small Projects) category. The 25,000 square foot, three-story, mixed-use development sits in the heart of the "Market District" – the area to be reinvigorated as the hospitality, retail, cultural and entertainment district in downtown York. Codo 28 has transformed a building that for 15 years was vacant and dilapidated at a high visibility location into a $4.6 million showpiece, adding to the City of York's tax base.

Mifflin Mills, Lebanon, received the Gold Award in the Housing and Community Institution Projects category. This affordable housing project is located in a formerly abandoned lot and eyesore in the neighborhood. By using the infill site to develop a townhouse project, the Housing Authority was able to enhance the character of the existing neighborhood while limiting costs and impact of the installation of new infrastructure.

The City of Lancaster's Green Infrastructure Plan received a award in the Plans and Planning category. Currently the city's combined sewer system is responsible for millions of gallons of polluted water that runs into the Conestoga River during storms every year. The city's long-term plan had envisioned large storage tanks, deep underground tunnels, and grey infrastructure to manage storm water. Instead, the city looked into green infrastructure and realized the cost savings and overall benefits. The results were the city's first-ever Green Infrastructure Plan. Over 25 years, the project is expected to reduce average annual storm water runoff by more than one billion gallons annually.

Steinwehr Avenue Streetscape Revitalization, Gettysburg, received a award in the Public Infrastructure Projects category. When the National Park Service opened a new visitor center for the Gettysburg National Military Park a mile away from the old facility on Steinwehr Avenue, the city rallied to revive this vital piece of the Gettysburg economy. The multi-phase streetscape improvement project is part of a strategy to sustain and reinvest in existing infrastructure and development of the Steinwehr Avenue business district. The project's goal is to transform the district into a walk able, safe destination increasing visitors to Steinwehr Avenue.

Barnes & Noble, Bucknell University, Lewisburg, received a award in the Commercial Projects category. The original proposal would have demolished the 1942 store and replaced it with a new building. Instead, project's developer Radnor Property Group and project's architect convinced Bucknell University and retailers that preservation of the existing building would be more economical, and a greener alternative to new construction. The store is

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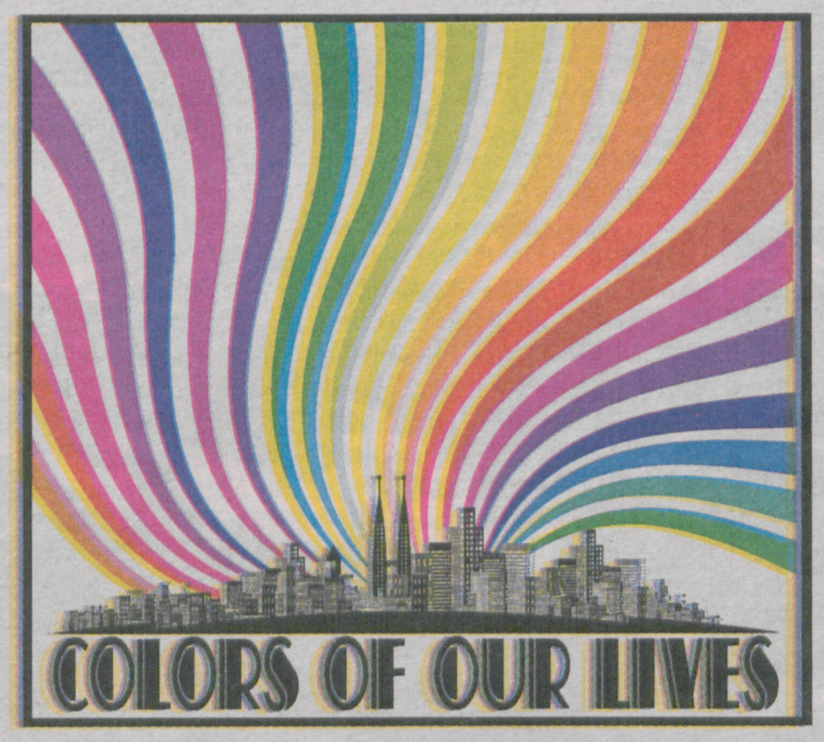
Dutch Prime Minister Meets with Russian Lesbian Leader

Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte, left, with open hands meets activists in Moscow. Polina Savchenko, a lesbian leader with Coming Out, is on the right side of the conference table wearing a white jacket. Click to enlarge. Following the meeting, Savchenko said, "The Prime Minister was sympathetic to the situation of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in Russia. He asked many questions: Why did we choose to become activists? How many individual are involved in our transparency and LGBT groups? Is the Russian government doing enough to protest the human rights LGBT Russians?" Photo credit: Coming Out

Gay Choruses Present Combined Concert Feb 18-19



"Colors of Our Lives" is a combined concert presented by the Harrisburg Gay Men's Chorus & Central PA Womyn's Chorus Feb. 18, 8 p.m. at Unitarian Church of Harrisburg, 1280 Clover Lane, Harrisburg, PA 17111, and Feb. 19, 2012, 2 p.m. at Unity Church of Harrisburg, 927 Wertzville Road, Enola, PA 17025. Tickets are $15 General Admission

Each of us has his or her personal story of how we coped, how we came out, how we put up with bullies.

"Colors of Our Lives" is a chronicle in word and song of some of the people who make up the region's LGBT/friendly communities. This joint concert between the Harrisburg Gay Men's and Central PA Womyn's choruses tells the personal stories of some of the members' gay men, lesbians and feminists who stuck to it, rose above the pain and not just made it, but did so shining like a rainbow.

The stories, along with others from the LGBT community, will be presented along with music that will provide commentary in an uplifting manner as well as entertain. The concert is modeled along the lines of the "It Gets Better" phenomenon. The choruses hope to specifically target the youth of our area and give them a message of hope and positive support.

Info: http://www.harrisburgmenschorus.org or 717-236-3809

Winter Adventures
Vail & Beaver Creek

by Andrew Collins

Colorado's most famous gay ski weeks are held in Aspen and Telluride, in mid-January and late February respectively, but over the past few years, Vail Gay Ski Week (http://vailgayskiweek.com) has begun drawing serious crowds. The gathering takes place in late March and includes the usual mix of fun on the slopes and hobnobbing back around the fireplaces and hot tubs. In winter, skiing and snowboarding may be the region's big draws, but it would be unfair to describe Vail (www.visitvailvalley.com) and nearby Beaver Creek (www.beavercreek.com) as mere ski towns. These scenic communities in the heart of the Colorado Rockies offer plenty of diversions.

Skiing the Back Bowls at Vail Mountain

Photo by Andrew Collins

Another misconception about Vail (www.vail.com) is that it's a crowded, freeway-side ski park. True, the resort's Front Side can get busy on weekends and does overlook Vail's bustling villages and I-70, and this facility is one of the largest in North America, with some 5,300 skiable acres and nearly 200 runs. But there are many places on Vail Mountain to escape from the crowds, and skiers of all abilities will find challenging, varied terrain.

For more solitude, ascend to the upper slopes of Vail's Front Side to access the fabled Back Bowls, a glorious - and vast - swath of less-trammeled runs that descend down the back of the mountain. From there, additional lifts carry those seeking truly secluded terrain into Blue Sky Basin, a stunning patch of wilderness developed by the resort in 2000. In reality, from the majority of Vail's ski runs, you can't see a single mile of freeway or village infrastructure. Just avoid the Front Side, which is possible as long as you're comfortable with intermediate terrain.

If you're planning to ski at more than a couple of the seven facilities owned by Vail Resorts (Vail, Beaver Creek, Breckenridge, Keystone, and Arapahoe Basin in Colorado, and Heavenly and Northstar in Lake Tahoe, California), consider buying an Epic Pass (www.snow.com/epic-pass.aspx), which offers great deals whether you're skiing for a week or a full season. Standard lift tickets for Vail are also good at nearby Beaver Creek.

Vail was developed as a planned resort community in 1962, designed with a nod toward the quaint chalet-inspired architecture of the Alps. Dozens of resorts, condos, shops, and restaurants have sprung up over the years, the earlier ones retaining the vintage, occasionally kitschy, aesthetic of Bavaria or Tyrol. More recently, Vail has seen a surge in ultra-luxury condo and hotel development. Several notable newcomers - Four Seasons, Ritz-Carlton, and Arrabelle at Vail Square among them - have upped the town's posh factor.

You don't need a car in Vail - the 10-mile paved, multi-use Gore Valley Trail wends through the village, and free buses run regularly among the key neighborhoods and connect with low-priced service throughout the entire valley. You can reach Vail by flying into Eagle County Airport (with direct flights to about a dozen cities), which is 30 miles west, or flying to Denver and renting a car or taking a bus - Vail is a two-hour drive from Denver (allow another 45 minutes from DIA, and account for slow-going on weekends and during rough weather). Vail is a 20-minute drive (shuttle bus service is available) from its smaller, swankier cousin, Beaver Creek.

The small but dapper town of Avon lies at the base of the Beaver Creek ski area and is home to several good restaurants as well as the superb Westin Riverfront Resort. It's a short, winding drive up the hill to reach fashionable Beaver Creek Village, home to 1,800 acres of superb skiing and snowboarding. Chains like Hyatt and Sheraton have impressive hotels set at Beaver Creek's main base village, which is also anchored by a large skating rink. Lifts and ski runs join Beaver Creek's main area with Arrowhead and Bachelor Gulch mountains - the latter has runs that trickle down to a sumptuous Ritz-Carlon. Almost improbably, given its location down on the Eagle River, the Westin Riverfront is an actual ski-in, ski-out resort - a gondola carries guests to a lift at Lower Beaver Creek Mountain (or you can take free shuttle buses up the hill to Beaver Creek Village). Head 5 miles west of Avon, and you'll find more upscale dining, lodging, and shopping in the town of Edwards.

It bears repeating that these communities abound with the usual diversions you might associate with acclaimed winter resorts. You can snowshoe, cross-country ski, take snowmobile tours, or simply stroll among the dozens of high-end shops in each village. You'll also find more than a dozen full-service spas among the area's resorts. At the Westin Riverfront, Spa Anjali offers a memorable Himalayan-inspired Abhyanga massage treatment as well as a red clover and mountain honey body mask. Other spas of note include the plush RockResorts Spa at the Arrabelle at Vail Square, and the serene Spa at Four Seasons Vail.

If you're planning a visit outside the snow season, note that several festivals take place in the area from late spring through early autumn, including Taste of Vail in April, the Vail Valley Music Festival from June to August, and the Vail International Dance Festival in late July and early August. The area is also renowned for mountain biking, hiking, fly-fishing, golf, and horseback.

Dining and lodging

The dining scene in Vail and Beaver Creek has begun to earn serious acclaim in recent years. Many of the top special-occasion restaurants are in resort hotels. In Vail, you don't want to miss Flame at the Four Seasons (www.fourseasons.com/vail), which is renowned for its sterling service and artfully presented food. Montauk Seafood Grill (http://montaukseafoodgrill.com) in Lionshead is quite good, and Terra Bistro (www.vailmountainlodge.com/terra-bistro) at Vail Mountain Lodge can be counted on for exceptional and innovative American fare. Atwater on Gore Creek at Vail Cascade (www.vailcascade.com/atwater) impresses diners with its reasonable prices and tasty updates on American comfort food, from seared wild salmon to Angus beef sliders. And Centre V (http://arrabelle.rockresorts.com/dining) at Arrabelle resort in Lionshead turns out excellent French bistro fare (including addictive truffle-parmesan frites and Moroccan chicken tagine) in a romantic but informal space.

At the Westin Riverfront, the stylish but relaxed Restaurant Avondale (www.avondalerestaurant.com) is well worth visiting - celeb chef Richard Sandoval took over operations here in fall 2011, giving the food the same

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Who Is Harrisburg Hope and Alan Kennedy-Shaffer?

By Frank Pizzoli

Harrisburg Hope founder Alan Kennedy-Shaffer

If hope springs eternal, it must have had a talk with Alan Kennedy-Shaffer.

As founder in 2010 of Harrisburg Hope, the 27-year-old attorney has been able to do what no one else has been able to accomplish – get warring parties in a two-year old fiscal stalemate to talk to one another. He's also created a level of trust between himself and Harrisburg Mayor Linda Thompson.

Dec. 1 about 125 people packed Harrisburg's Midtown Scholar Bookstore when Kennedy-Shaffer brought together Attorney Mark Schwartz, who represented four Harrisburg City Council members filing for federal bankruptcy on behalf of city, a move since denied by a federal judge; PA Sen. Jeff Piccola, author of Harrisburg City takeover legislation; and Dauphin County Commissioner Mike Preis. The county is guarantor on loans made to the city.

Sen. Jeff Piccola, author of Harrisburg City takeover legislation.

Harrisburg Mayor Linda Thompson

Dec. 8 Kennedy-Shaffer drew in about 150 people when he hosted Harrisburg Mayor Linda Thompson in an "open mike" forum.

A Yale University and William & Mary Law School graduate, Kennedy-Shaffer is fitted to the role of convener.

"Harrisburg Hope is the only forum in which members of the audience get to ask the questions," Kennedy-Shaffer explains. He starts off with his own short list of questions and then adroitly moderates for another hour or so, relying on time keepers to alert speakers that their time is up. And he enforces the time limit. He also doesn't allow for "stun gun" questions. He politely acknowledges the questioner and then moves right along. His emerging signature gesture at the end of each program is to present all panelists with a "Civility Award".

His sensitivity to civility may be his mom's doing.

"My Mom used to take me and my brothers to gay pride marches in New York City, starting when I was 1-year old in a stroller," he said. "I specifically remember the Stonewall 25th anniversary march (1994)," he said. He was 10 years old and today is no stranger to lgbt issues.

Kennedy-Shaffer is author of The Obama Revolution and Denial and Deception: A Study of the Bush Administration's Rhetorical Case for Invading Iraq. He's served as a regional field director for Barack Obama and the Democratic Party in Virginia and subsequently elected vice chairman of the Dauphin County Democratic Party. The Harrisburg resident is president of Danzante Community Art Center and former chairman of Broad Street Market.

At press time, he announced his next scheduled speaker, Dec. 19, is the recently court-appointed fiscal receiver David Unkovic. He is charged with crafting a plan from what seems like a mountain of previously proposed fiscal recovery scenarios that have all stalled out over various objections from one or another party to the problem.

In his simple but direct way, Kennedy-Shaffer is attempting to bring a measure of civility and order to what has become a dialogue of chaos and confusion. Currently an attorney with the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board and previously an attorney for the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency and he seems to have a fix on both bureaucracy and bullpucky.

Info: www.harrisburghope.com

Harrisburg Hope panel discussion on Harrisburg City's fiscal crisis held last month at Midtown Scholar Bookstore. From left: Harrisburg Hope founder and panel moderator Alan Kennedy-Shaffer; Attorney Mark Schwartz, who represented four Harrisburg City Council members filing for federal bankruptcy on behalf of city; PA Sen. Jeff Piccola, author of Harrisburg City takeover legislation; and Dauphin County Commissioner Mike Preis. The county is guarantor on loans made to the city.

Harrisburg Hope founder and panel moderator Alan Kennedy-Shaffer, Midtown Scholar Bookstore owner Eric Papenfuse, and Attorney Mark Schwartz, who represented four Harrisburg City Council members filing for federal bankruptcy on behalf of city.

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Join "Creatures of the Night" at Bal Masque Feb. 18

Are you a fan of the "Twilight" series? How about "The Rocky Horror Picture Show"?

Join all the "Creatures of the Night" at Appalachian Brewing Company, Cameron Street, on Feb. 18, 7 p.m. to midnight for a frighteningly-fabulous evening at the Art Association of Harrisburg Bal Masque.

Tickets are available online at www.artassocofhbg.com or by calling The Art Association at 236-1432.

Bal emcee "The Marquis de Schulz" (deejay Chuck Schulz) will keep the party hopping all evening with blasts from the past, rock & roll, R&B classics, 80's standards and top-40 hits. In keeping with the "Creatures of the Night" theme, of special interest will be group dance versions of "Rocky Horror Picture Show's" famous "Time Warp," and Michael Jackson's "Thriller."

Always a major highlight of the Bal, the costume competition will be judged in categories such as "Best Individual," "Best Couple," "Best Group," "Most Bizarre," and "Most Elegant." For those looking for recycled evening wear or costume basics, guests may find just what they need at any of the local Goodwill Stores at "ghastly" low prices. The event invites wild flights of creative costume fancy!

Psychic Dr. Edward North is predicted to be on hand again, making prognostications for the Night Creatures who dare to look into the future. One sure prediction for the Bal is that the Silent Auction will again offer fantastic gift baskets with wine and cocktail fixings; certificates for restaurants, theatres and golf packages; varied artwork; and more.

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Out of Town continued from page 18

creative Pan Latin spin he's made famous at his Denver restaurants. Up at Beaver Creek Village, there are few more romantic places to dine than Grouse Mountain Grill (www.grousemountaingrill.com), whose commitment to local ingredients is evident in such dishes as pan-seared Colorado striped bass over lentil ragout. And in the village of Edwards, the smart but casual Juniper Restaurant (www.juniperrestaurant.com) has a splendid wine list and specializes in creative American and Continental fare.

More casual options include Blue Moose Pizza (www.bluemoosepizza.com) in Lionshead Village, and and Rimini Gelato (www.riminigelato.com), with locations in Vail and Beaver Creek, a fine choice for sweets or a cup of hot cocoa. There are no gay bars in the Rockies, but the dozens of convivial nightspots in these parts are consistently gay-friendly. In Vail, excellent options for enjoying regional ales and lagers from Colorado's bounty of craft breweries include the Tap Room at Bridge Street and Garfinkel's Bar and Grill. A best bet among dance clubs is Samana Lounge, but Vail is more about listening to live music than dancing to DJs. In Beaver Creek Village, head to the hip Osprey Lounge for tapas and artful cocktails, or check out the scenes at Vin 48 wine bar and Loaded Joe's Coffeehouse and Lounge, both down in Avon village.

Vail and Beaver Creek are home to some of the finest resorts in Rockies. Venerable long-time favorites include the centrally located and beautifully designed Lodge at Vail (http://lodgeatvail.rockresorts.com), with its excellent spa, hot tubs, pool, and warmly furnished rooms, including suites of up to three bedrooms. It's the flagship of the venerable RockResorts brand, which also operates the sumptuous Arrabelle at Vail Square (http://arrabelle.rockresorts.com) in Lionshead Village. The Four Seasons Vail (www.fourseasons.com/vail) has been wowing visitors since it opened in late 2010. It's a fairly intimate member of the illustrious brand, with just 121 rooms and the personal, top-notch service Four Seasons is famous for.

Up in Beaver Creek, you'll find two more excellent RockResorts properties, the hip and contemporary Osprey at Beaver Creek (http://ospreyatbeavercreek.rockresorts.com) and the more classically elegant Pines Lodge (http://pineslodge.rockresorts.com). The Ritz-Carlton at Bachelor Gulch (www.ritzcarlton.com) excels on service and has beautiful rooms within a many-gabled lodge-like building. And Avon's Westin Riverfront (www.starwoodhotels.com) has huge, contemporary rooms with large windows, extensive kitchens in suites, and plenty of luxe perks - it's LEED-certified and designed with a clean, modern, yet unquestionably cushy aesthetic.

Down within walking distance of the many shops and restaurants in Edwards, the Inn at Riverwalk (www.innandsuitesatriverwalk.com) is a reasonably priced, upscale option, perfect if you don't mind being a short drive or bus ride from the slopes. Vail's Christiana Hotel (www.christiania.com/) is another mid-priced option, and there's also a perfectly comfortable, nicely updated Comfort Inn (www.comfortinn.com) in Avon.

Finally, the area has a dizzying variety of condo rentals, which can be ideal for groups of friends traveling together. Rocky Mountain Vacation Rentals (http://rockymountainvacationrentals.com/) is the official go-to for condo rentals during Vail Gay Ski Week and is a great bet any time of year. *Andrew Collins covers gay travel for the New York Times-owned website GayTravel.About.com and is the author of Fodor's Gay Guide to the USA.*

6 Projects continued from page 16

located in the heart of the traditional downtown business district, and within walking distance of the university. The project was able to capitalize on the existing transit and civil infrastructure, while simultaneously energizing stagnating retail areas by better linking them with the university community.

Logos Academy, York, received an award in the Housing and Community Institution Project category. Located in downtown York on an urban Brownfield site, the development is zoned for commercial waterfront to the east, and residential to the west. Logos Academy replaces a light manufacturing facility, which had been vacant for several years. The site is also home to a private, non-profit, faith-based school, including Kindergarten through 8th grade students.

10,000 Friends of Pennsylvania is an advocate for responsible and efficient land use.

Info: http://10000friends.org

Workplace Grows More Accepting

The corporate world - especially at law firms and big banks - is a much better place for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender employees than it was a decade ago, according to a new report from LGBT advocacy group Human Rights Campaign.

When the Corporate Equality Index was first calculated in 2002 to check major American companies for policies mandating equal treatment of workers regardless of sexual orientation, just 13 businesses of 319 had a perfect score. This year, with even more criteria, 190 companies out of 636 participants landed a 100% rating.

That included 55 law firms and 22 banks and financial services such as Bank of America Corp., JPMorgan Chase & Co., Citigroup Inc. and Wells Fargo & Co.

Consulting companies did well, as did retailers and those in the food-beverage-grocery sector. Other companies with 100% ratings included AT&T Inc. and Ford Motor Co.

Transportation and travel businesses had few perfect scorers. Oil and gas companies, as well as mining and metal firms, also did not have many scorers at the top. Wal-Mart Stores Inc. had a 60% rating, as did General Electric Co. Exxon Mobil Corp. scored a -25%.

The majority of participants scored above 80%, with many more firms now offering nondiscrimination policies that included both "sexual orientation" and "gender identity," medical benefits that don't distinguish between spouses and partners, and healthcare that factors in transgender needs.

Human Rights Campaign invited publicly traded companies from the Fortune 1000 list as well as firms in the top 200 of American Lawyer magazine's rankings. Any private employer with at least 500 full-time U.S. employees could also ask to be included.

Bal Masque continued from page 20

A raffle for a 10-carat gold ladies' ring with aquamarines, valued at $800, will also be conducted throughout the evening.

And did we mention the menu? The Appalachian Brewery's culinary wizards will concoct an other-worldly feast with such treats as Virgin Bloody Mary Shooters in Test Tubes, Unholy Crostini Trinity with Goat Cheese, Chicken Salad and Smoked Salmon Spread, Monster Mashed Potato Martini Bar, Great Pumpkin Ravioli, and The Sacrifice (prime rib). Dessert is devilishly-delicious Heart of Darkness Chocolate Fondue. A cash bar with ABC's micro-brewed beers along with wines and mixed drinks will provide perfect accompaniment to the hors d'ouevres and entrees.

Guests can keep the memories of the night alive with photos by Paul Vasiliades, who will shoot posed photos with props in the Gallery area.

The Bal Masque is the Art Association's major annual fundraiser, generating monies in support of the AAH School and exhibition programs.

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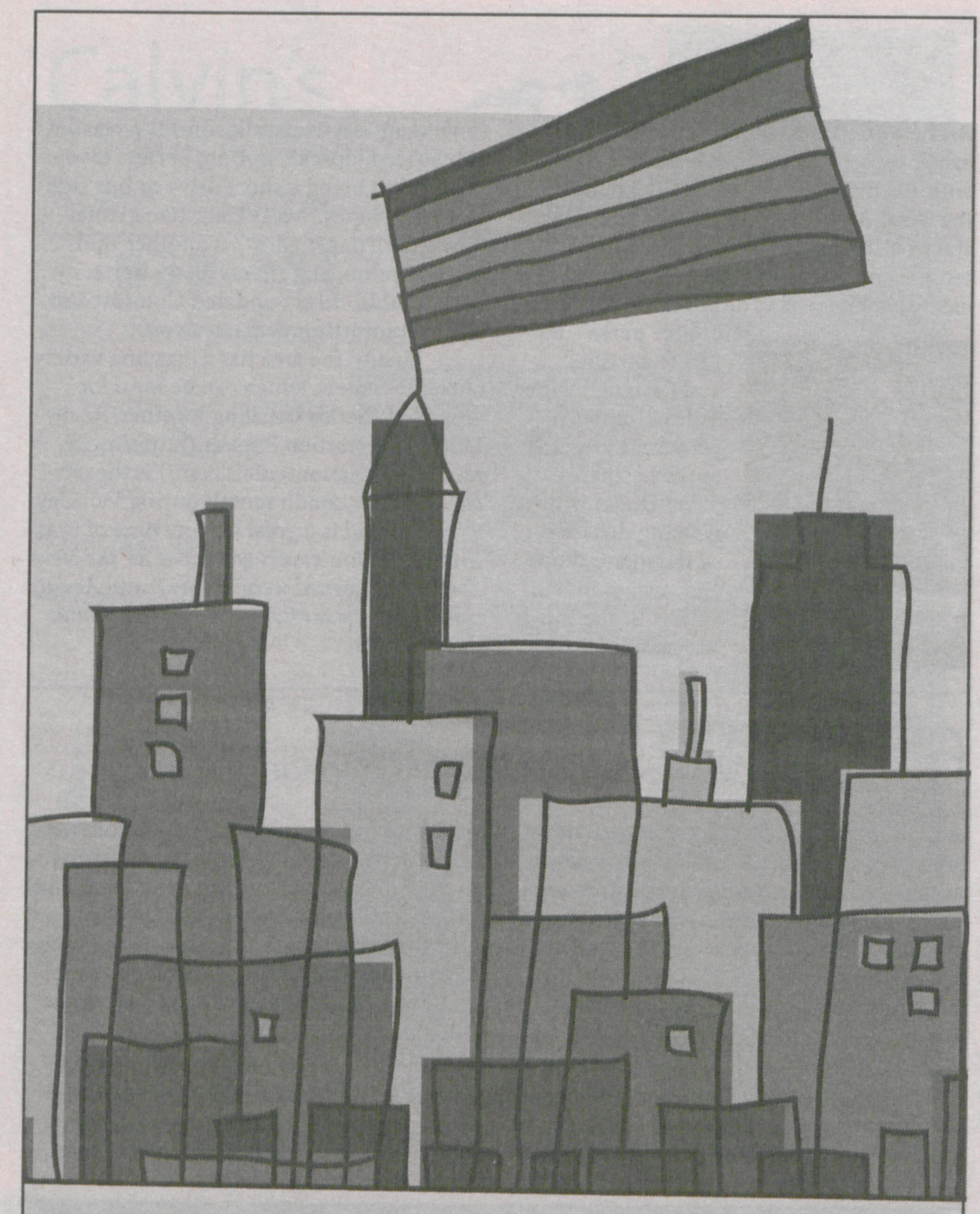


Martin Envisions Wider Role for Pride

By Frank Pizzoli

Brad Martin

When Brad Martin, 2012 president of Central PA Pride Festival, sat in the driver's seat he saw a different road in front of him for the annual event.

Last year the venue celebrated its 20th anniversary. Looking ahead, Martin wants to make at least a portion of the event which draws as many as 5,000 attendees focus on the political reality of living gay in Pennsylvania.

Parties are nice Martin says but "forty-three years after Stonewall Pennsylvania does not yet have an employment discrimination act and similar laws protecting individuals from discrimination simply because they're gay."

Martin would like to have a portion of the Pride event address this reality.

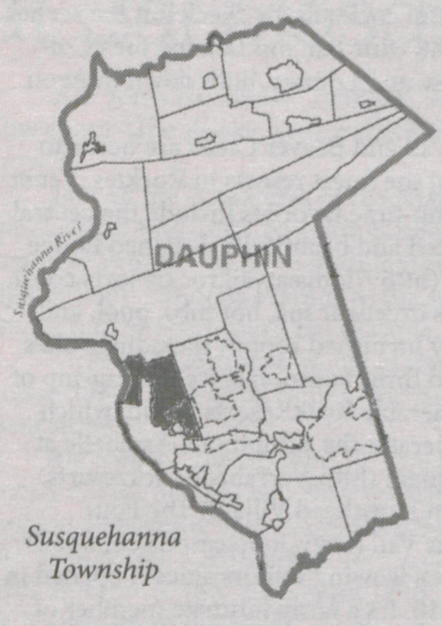
"I cannot look into the crystal ball and forecast exactly what we may add to Pride for 2012 but I think adding more political awareness to the event is wise," Martin said.

In the years since Stonewall after which parades and Pride events sprang up all over the country, many have openly criticized the evolving corporate and business nature of the events as "only corporate," meaning sponsors often look at attendees only as a "market" rather than a "movement".

"We're both, a market for sponsors and a movement for political change," Martin said. He does not see the two identities as incompatible. "We have great relationships with our sponsors because I think we both understand the nature of the beast," Martin said.

Inclusion is good business. Why eliminate customers? Once you develop a customer base why allow it to dwindle and move underground because laws do not properly provide civil rights protections.

Anti-discrimination Law contd. from pg. 1



Susquehanna Township

housing, and public accommodation.

There were 14 speakers at the meeting with 12 speaking in favor of passage, two speakers were opposed. The other big issue item on the agenda was the 2012 budget. "The budget did not draw a single comment," Dorko noted.

"Ordinance comments were overwhelming positive," Dorko said, pointing out that Pittsburgh-based American Family Association of PA did circulate email communications to township residents advising readers not "to make the same mistake several southeastern Pennsylvania townships have made recently."

"I don't see our actions as making a mistake," township board of commissioners president Diane Bowman told Central Voice. LGBT residents are "not unworthy, just different."

Upon initially proposing the ordinance, Dorko cited inaction by the Pa. General Assembly in enacting statewide anti-discrimination protections, even though 25 municipalities in the state already have such protections, although the state's three largest cities – Altoona, Wilkes-Barre, and Williamsport – do not.

Most recently, Jenkintown Borough and Whitemarsh Township, both in Montgomery County, passed protective ordinances, preceded by Bethlehem. The complete list includes: Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Allentown, Erie (County), Allegheny (County), Reading, Scranton, Bethlehem, Lancaster (City), Harrisburg, York, State College, Easton, Newton Borough, Swarthmore, Lower Merion Township, West Chester, New Hope, Landsdown, Doylestown, Conshohocken, Haverford, Springfield Township, and Montgomery County.

Over the past year, Equality PA has combined efforts with locally-based advocates to pass ordinances in eight municipalities.

"We are really just doing what state legislators have told us to do all along on non-discrimination," Equality PA executive director Ted Martin told Central Voice. "Pass local ordinances and that will build grassroots pressure on us to act they say. So we have made passing ordinances a top priority and we wanted 25 on the books by 2012," he said.

"Many ordinances have passed with bipartisan support and our opposition has learned that the world did not end," Martin said. "We have 12 other communities" in various stages of organizing ways to have similar ordinances passed in their municipalities, he noted, adding "we get more calls on this subject than you can imagine."

Dietz Announces Run contd. from pg. 1

Dietz tells Central Voice the voter registration for the new 104th approximates that of the old district. President Obama carried 49% of the old district's vote. US Senator Robert Casey and his US House counterpart Congressman Tim Holden carried about 50% of the vote in their last election cycle. "It's a swing district in play," Dietz said.

A 2011 FAB award honoree for service to the region's LGB T community, Dietz is a proponent of eco-tourism and government reformer.

Why run?

"Local family sustaining jobs, legislative reform, quality public education, and conservation are very important to my friends and neighbors," Dietz said. "At a time when state government should be helping citizens, our legislature is more disconnected than ever from the common citizen. The legislature's automatic pay raises are not reflective of stagnant wages and high rates of unemployment in the private sector," Dietz said. "It is time for our state government to reaffirm its commitment to making Pennsylvania the best state in which to live, work, play, and raise a family."

Diane Bowman, president of the Susquehanna Township Commissioners and former chair of the Dauphin County Democratic Committee will chair Dietz's campaign. Dietz has, Bowman says, "what it takes to advocate for those community-minded values from inside the General Assembly."

Dietz is one of three known and out candidates running for seats in the state house. Pa. State Rep. Babette Josephs faces a challenge for her 182nd District seat from Philadelphia attorney Brian Sims, who last election cycle served as her campaign finance chair.

Josh Young, a Caln Township commissioner in Chester County is also running for a newly created House seat in that county that was formed due to population growth. Map makers removed one seat in Allegheny County where population had been declining.

Chris Dietz is graduated from West Perry High School and a 1999 Penn State Mechanical Engineering graduate (B.S.). He cites his membership in community groups, including the Boy Scouts of America and church youth groups, as having instilled in him a sense of public service. Part of the Millersburg Bicentennial Celebration, he worked with others to raise more than $300,000 to support the event. Dietz co-founded the Tour de Millersburg cycling race as a component of the Bicentennial, and has served as president of the Tour for three years raising $25,000 in proceeds for community non-profit groups. Dietz and his partner Alexander Reber enjoy getting to know their community and spending time with Chris's cat Chief. Info: www.VoteDietz.com; info@VoteDietz.com

LGBT community center coalition

By Louie Marven
Director of Education & Youth Services
LGBT Community Center Coalition of Central PA

Community Center Partners with MCC

Central PA LGBT Aging Network (CPLAN) is set for a productive new year with plans for monthly programs throughout 2012. Additionally, CPLAN is pleased to announce a partnership with MCC of the Spirit for the Coalition Durable Medical Equipment Closet.

Mark Smith, physical therapist and CPLAN volunteer, explained to the committee that oftentimes insurance companies do not cover durable medical equipment items such as canes, walkers, and wheelchairs. In response, several churches in the area have developed a medical equipment or loan closet ministry to serve those who are under-insured or who have no insurance.

Smith further explained his concern that many LGBT individuals do not feel comfortable utilizing these loan closets since they frequently operate as ministry programs of faith communities that are not open and affirming of LGBT people. Therefore, the LGBT Community Center Coalition decided to utilize the CPLAN project and partner with MCC of the Spirit to develop and administer a durable medical equipment loan closet specifically for the LGBT community.

The loan closet will be housed at MCC of the Spirit facility in Harrisburg. The closet will begin to collect donations of durable medical equipment by holding two specific drop-off times. The next available time is Saturday, January 14, 2012 from 9 am to noon.

The Coalition Durable Medical Equipment Closet will accept the following items for donations: canes, walkers, crutches, wheelchairs, shower chairs, and cash donations to purchase replacement parts for minor repairs to equipment and for cleaning supplies. All equipment should be cleaned before donating it to the loan closet. Volunteers will inspect the equipment to make sure that it is in working order and in a safe condition to be loaned out to another individual. The loan closet will not accept urinals, bedpans, bedside commodes, hospital beds, or any kind of braces or orthotic/prosthetic device.

The loan closet is set to open for business on February 1 and will remain during MCC of the Spirit's regular business hours: Monday to Thursday, 10 am to 3 am or by appointment. People will be asked to sign a waiver of liability form and leave contact information. The equipment will be on loan to individuals free of charge for as long as they need it. Once the need for the equipment has past, the item should be returned to the loan closet. Check with MCC of the Spirit and with the LGBT Community Center Coalition for future donation dates.

Saturday, February 25, 2012 will be an Oldies TV Dinner and Dance event sponsored by the LGBT Community Center Coalition's CPLAN program and held at Liquid 891, on Eisenhower Boulevard in Harrisburg from 6 to 9:30 pm. The cost of the event is $10 per person and will include a light dinner buffet featuring fruit salad, stuffed celery, stuffed bologna rolls, tuna Casserole, meatloaf, mac & cheese, green bean casserole, and Chex Party Mix. Tickets can be purchased ahead of time from the LGBT Community Center Coalition or Liquid 891. Tickets will also be available the night of the event.

The first part of the evening (6pm to 7:30 pm) will feature sitcoms from the 50s, 60s, and 70s such as I Love Lucy, Happy Days, and Lavern and Shirley in a drive in type of decor. Dancing will begin at 7:30 pm with the DJ spinning tunes from the 1950s, 60s, and 70s. The evening will conclude at 9:30 pm when Liquid will return to its usual Saturday evening programing.

CPLAN will hold its next committee meeting on Saturday January 14, 2012 from 9 am to noon at MCC of the Spirit. The community is invited to attend this meeting as the committee will be reevaluating its strategic plan and planning programs for the remainder of the 2012 year.

The mission of the LGBT Community Center Coalition is to create common ground for the LGBT community and allies in central Pennsylvania by providing services through spiritual, educational, and cultural activities that foster wholeness.

Open Stage Main Stage Offers Riveting Productions

As part of its Main Stage productions, Open Stage of Harrisburg offers August Wilson's "Ma Rainey's Black Bottom, Feb. 3-25. The production is a riveting play with music. It's 1927 in a rundown studio in Chicago where Ma Rainey is recording new sides of old favorites. More goes down in the session than music in this riveting portrayal of rage, racism, the self hate and exploitation. The New York Times calls the play "searing ... funny, salty, carnal and lyrical"! Recommended for mature audiences.

The company also offers "The Dairy of Anne Frank" by Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett, adapted by Wendy Kesselman, Feb. 25, 8 p.m. Open Stage's 13th annual production of this tender, inspiring award-winning drama will return to Whitaker Center in March 2012 for one public performance only. The highly acclaimed, award-winning play won the Pulitzer Prize, the Tony Award, the Critic's Circle Award, and other coveted awards. The play is an inspiring story of perseverance and hope, which serves as a timeless lesson that the spirit of a child is impossible to deny.

Totem Pole Expands Season

In the 62nd Season at Totem Pole Playhouse-Fayetteville, PA, audiences will be treated to six shows never before seen on the Totem Pole stage plus a special preseason presentation.

Some favorite company actors, such as Sean Fri from 2011's Honus and Me, Artistic Director Ray Ficca and long time favorite Wil Love have already committed to performing in the 2012 season. In addition to the usual six self-produced plays and musicals, the Playhouse will host an additional show involving another very familiar and very popular face at the Playhouse.

Ray Ficca and Wil Love (Red, White and Tuna)

Artistic Director Ray Ficca and Playhouse fixture Wil Love (42nd season at the Playhouse) will star in the latest installment of the "Tuna" comedy series, Red, White and Tuna. The series has been a smash hit across the country for almost 30 years. The play offers a glimpse into a day in the life of the colorful and hilarious denizens of the fictitious town of Tuna, TX. Sparks fly as they come together for 4th of July and the Tuna High School reunion. Love starred in first offering of the series, Greater Tuna, at the Playhouse in the early 90s. F & M Trust serves as the sponsor of this show.

Robbie Limon returns to the theater after two hugely successful shows last season, playing to packed houses in both Hank Williams: Lost Highway and the musical Southern Crossroads. Next summer he'll be inhabiting another iconic singer as he brings the story of Buddy Holly to the stage in a special presentation. An Evening with Buddy Holly will precede the first show of the season with seven special performances from May 16-20, 2012. This show is sponsored by the new FM 96.3 and Route 30, Too!.

Along with Red, White and Tuna, the 2012 main lineup at the Playhouse includes the country musical Chaps (sponsored by Walker, Connor & Spang, LLC and Country Legends 92.1), romantic comedies Moon Over the Brewery (sponsored by M & T Bank and Dr. Paul E. Orange Family Medi-

continued on page 24

MCC column

By Rev. Lori Rivera, Pastor
MCC of the Spirit

Gay Marriage, Civil Unions and Discrimination

My partner Darlene and I have an incredible nephew. All of his life he has gone by the nickname Scooter. Scooter is in his 30s now, married with 3 kids of his own. During his high school years he spent a great deal of time at our home while and after his parents divorced. We had great conversations about every topic he could think of including religion and gay rights. He was visible upset when he found out that Darlene and I couldn't get legally married. Actually he was downright angry. He thought it was so unfair. He witnessed his parent's marriage crumble and end in divorce yet we, his aunts, couldn't even get married. When he was a senior in high school he joined the debate club, a perfect place for Scooter, our endless talker. He came to our home one afternoon to tell us about his upcoming debate. The topic was gay marriage and he was taking the pro position. I was so proud of him and even more so when he shared with us a few days later that he won the debate. This was over 15 years ago and yet the debate still continues.

As we approach Valentine's Day, gay marriage, civil union, and marriage equality will become a more prominent conversation and the debate will continue as it does every year. I am so thankful for the work that has already been done by many people in many states in this country and yet I am fully aware that there is still much to do.

Part of the conversation will be - should the LGBT community work toward gay "marriage" or "civil unions"? To me the wording isn't important. What is important is that I have the same rights in my relationship with Darlene that any heterosexual couple receives upon their marrying. My mother recently remarried. At the moment the ceremony was done and the judge signed off on their license she had more rights with her new husband then I have with Darlene after 27 years together. Medical issues, inheritance issues, actually they weren't issues for her, they were automatically hers. Darlene and I, on the other hand, had to spend hundreds of dollars to get legal paperwork done to have our decision making issues set in place.

Maybe what is needed is new language and new viewpoints. Maybe instead of calling it a "marriage license" it should be called a "License to be legally joined as a couple." Maybe not the best name but someone will come up with something better. The license is only needed to legally register the joined couple with a governmental agency. The license doesn't determine whether or not the couple can have a relationship, is doesn't determine how they celebrate the joining of their relationship nor does it designate who has to do the joining. Actually the license is worthless until the couple undergoes some ritual with an authority to sign the license indicating that they have been joined together and then they have returned the license with all the required signatures to a local governmental agency.

Some folks will continue to go to a Justice of the Peace or a notary to be legally joined together and some will have a religious ceremony. In either case the civil requirements will have been performed when all the signatures are on the license. I know one argument against gay marriage from some religious houses of worship is that the priest or minister will be forced to perform gay marriage. I found this argument funny. No one tells a priest or minister which heterosexual couples they should join together so who is going to make them join a LGBT couple. If a couple wants a religious ceremony then they get a priest or minister who is agreeable to performing the ceremony.

In my opinion, this whole issue (and many others) all boils down to an issue of discrimination. It is discrimination for any LGBT person to not have all the same rights as any heterosexual person. This discrimination includes not having the same legal rights for tax purposes, medical issues, ownership and inheritance issues that come with being legally joined with another person.

So as we approach Valentine's Day, maybe the conversation shouldn't be about whether we have "gay marriage" or "civil unions," but how do we ensure that every person in the USA has the same legal rights and then we strive to end discrimination.

York Little Theatre Speakers Available

Local author, playwright Judy Wolfman leads speaker's bureau.

York Little Theatre has started a speaker's bureau lead by local author and playwright Judy Wolfman. Qualified, trained speakers are available to present a program to area clubs, organizations and associations at no cost.

Talks may be tailored to the specific interests of the organization but can include a brief overview of YLT's rich, nearly 80-year history; theatrical anecdotes and stories; an outline of the wide range of opportunities available to volunteers in a community theatre; and an overview of the many talented people who were involved at YLT and have become successful in the entertainment industry. Presentations can also include a video presentation or live entertainment.

"The YLT Ambassadors, our speaker's bureau, was created to reach out to the community," explains organizer Judy Wolfman. "YLT is the oldest and largest community theatre in the region and is regarded by many as a community treasure. I hope to make more people aware of YLT and the benefits derived from a vibrant community theatre." Organizations, clubs, and other groups interested in booking a speaker or getting more information should contact YLT at 717-854-3894.

YLT is located at 27 S. Belmont Street, York, just south of Market Street at the intersection of I83.

Totem Pole continued from page 23

cine) and Almost Maine (sponsored by Orrstown Bank and Main Line Broadcasting), the Hitchcock comedy-thriller The 39 Steps (sponsored by Essis & Sons Carpet One and Rotz and Stonesifer, CPA), and the season finale Cole (sponsored by Franklin County Visitors Bureau) , a musical celebrating the life and music of the iconic Cole Porter.

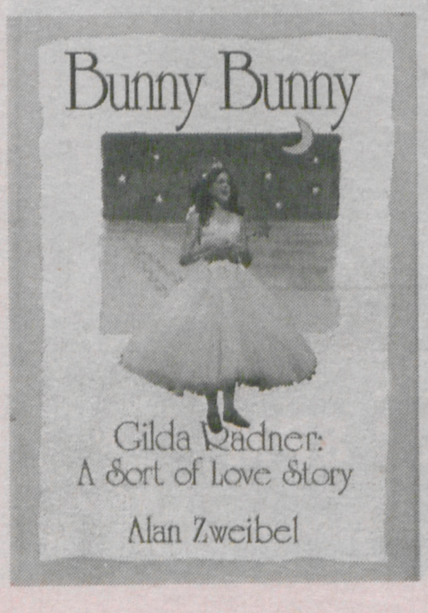
Robbie Limon
(An Evening with Buddy Holly)

"It's an ambitious line-up, that's for sure," says Ficca. "But I think our audiences like it when we swing for the fences. Last year was one of our strongest ever, and I think the only way to follow that up is to try and top it. This year, we have a very funny season, a very romantic season, and some Cole Porter as well!"

Many local businesses have signed on to sponsor and generously support the shows in the 2012 season.

Included in that list is, along with Totem Poler John Putch and his movie Route 30, Too!, slated to premiere at the Capitol Theatre in Chambersburg in September 2012. "The cost of live theatre is not going down, it is always going up. "We deeply depend on our sponsors to keep our Playhouse as affordable possible for our community while maintaining the artistic excellence that audiences have come to expect. We ask that our patrons and the community support our sponsors for their commitment to our live professional theatre," says Ficca. Any new business who might be interested in learning more about show sponsorship opportunities may call the theatre for more information. 717-352-2164.

Gamut Theatre Group Presents Gilda Radner Story



By Alan Zweibel

Gamut Theatre Group will present Bunny Bunny: Gilda Radner: A Sort of Love Story by Alan Zweibel which will run Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays from January 20 – February 5, 2012 at Gamut Classic Theatre, located at 605 Strawberry Square, Downtown Harrisburg.

This autobiographical play tries to recapture the non-sexual, but deeply felt relationship between Gilda Radner, one of Saturday Night Live's original Not Ready-for-Prime-Time players, and Alan Zweibel, who was a writer for the show. Alternately comic and heartbreaking, the play follows these two overgrown kids as they ride their bumper-car lives right up to Radner's death from ovarian cancer. Their loyalty and love glows through every scene.

Bunny Bunny is directed by Gamut's Artistic Director, J. Clark Nicholson. He explains why he chose the show for the season, "Both of Gamut's companies: HSC and PHP are rooted in classic comedy and feel very connected to its finest practitioners. In that spirit we presented Neil Simon's "The Sunshine Boys" last year, and this year we bring you the stoy of one of America's most loved comediennes, Gilda Radner. Originally a children's theater actor, Gilda's spirit is evident in all of our comedies."

Scenic design by Ian Potter; sound design by Mike Banks; costume design by Jen Kilander; lighting design by Karen Gasser; and produced by Melissa Nicholson.

Gamut Theatre Group is led by Artistic Director Clark Nicholson and Executive Director Melissa Nicholson.

Bunny Bunny will be presented at Gamut Classic Theatre in Strawberry Square from January 20 through February 5 on Fridays and Saturdays at 7:30pm and on Sundays at 2:30pm. Tickets are $27 for adults and $17 for students/seniors.

Friday performances are Buy-One-Get-One free ticket shows; Saturday evening performances are Bottle of Wine shows, where one admission is free with purchase of a regular-priced admission and donation of a bottle of wine for HSC's annual Shakespeare's Birthday celebration; Sunday performances are Bring Your Own Price shows, where any size donation buys your admission.

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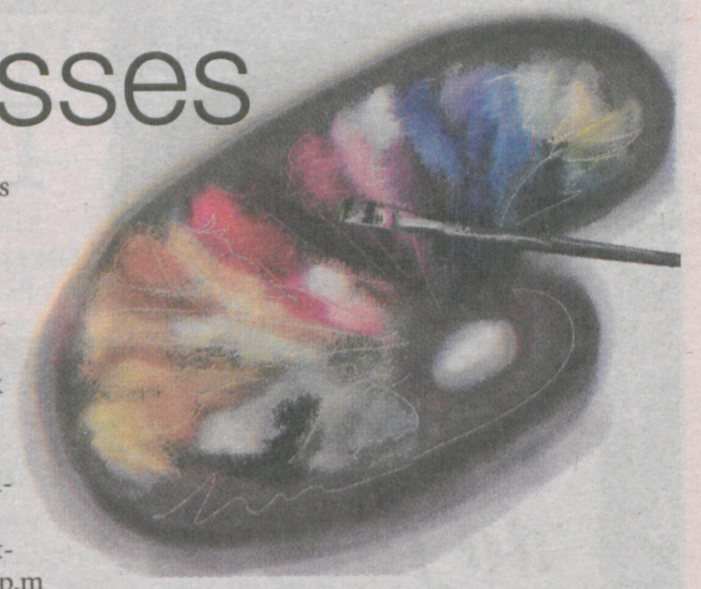
Register for Winter Art Classes



Winter Semester Art Classes for Youth and Adults at The Art Association of Harrisburg begin the week of Jan. 9 in the main building at 21 N. Front St. and the four studios in the association's Reservoir Park facility.

New Winter classes are:

- Artistic Power Point, Bradley Gebhart, Thursdays, 6-8 p.m
- Building Your Digital Portfolio, Nancy Cates, Tuesdays, 7-9 p.m
- Fused Art Jewelry with Leslie Scott, 3-week class, Sundays, Jan. 15-29, 2:30-5 p.m.
- Precious Metal Clay Jewelry, Leslie Scott, Feb. 12-26, 2:30-5 p.m.
- Mixed Metal Clay Jewelry, Leslie Scott, Mar. 11-25, 2:30-5 p.m.
- Pastels, Kim Stone, Wednesdays, 7-9 p.m.

Other adult three-dimensional classes include:

- Hand-Built and Wheel Pottery, Innovative Glazing, Open Clay Studio, and Clay Sculpture.

Adult drawing classes will include:

- Basic Drawing and Life Study Workshop.

Adult painting classes include::

- Basic Oil, Acrylic Painting, Watercolour, Open Painting Studio, Intermediate Drawing & Painting, Experimental Mixed Media, and Collage.

Other media course for adults will include:

- Basics of Digital Photography and Soap Making, as well as Jewelry Workshop.

For kids, classes include:

- Clay for Kids, Art for Kids, Drawing and Painting for Kids, Junior Drawing and Painting, Fantasy Art, and Anime' and Manga.

Info: www.artassocofhbg.com for detailed class descriptions, tuition fees or 717-236-1432

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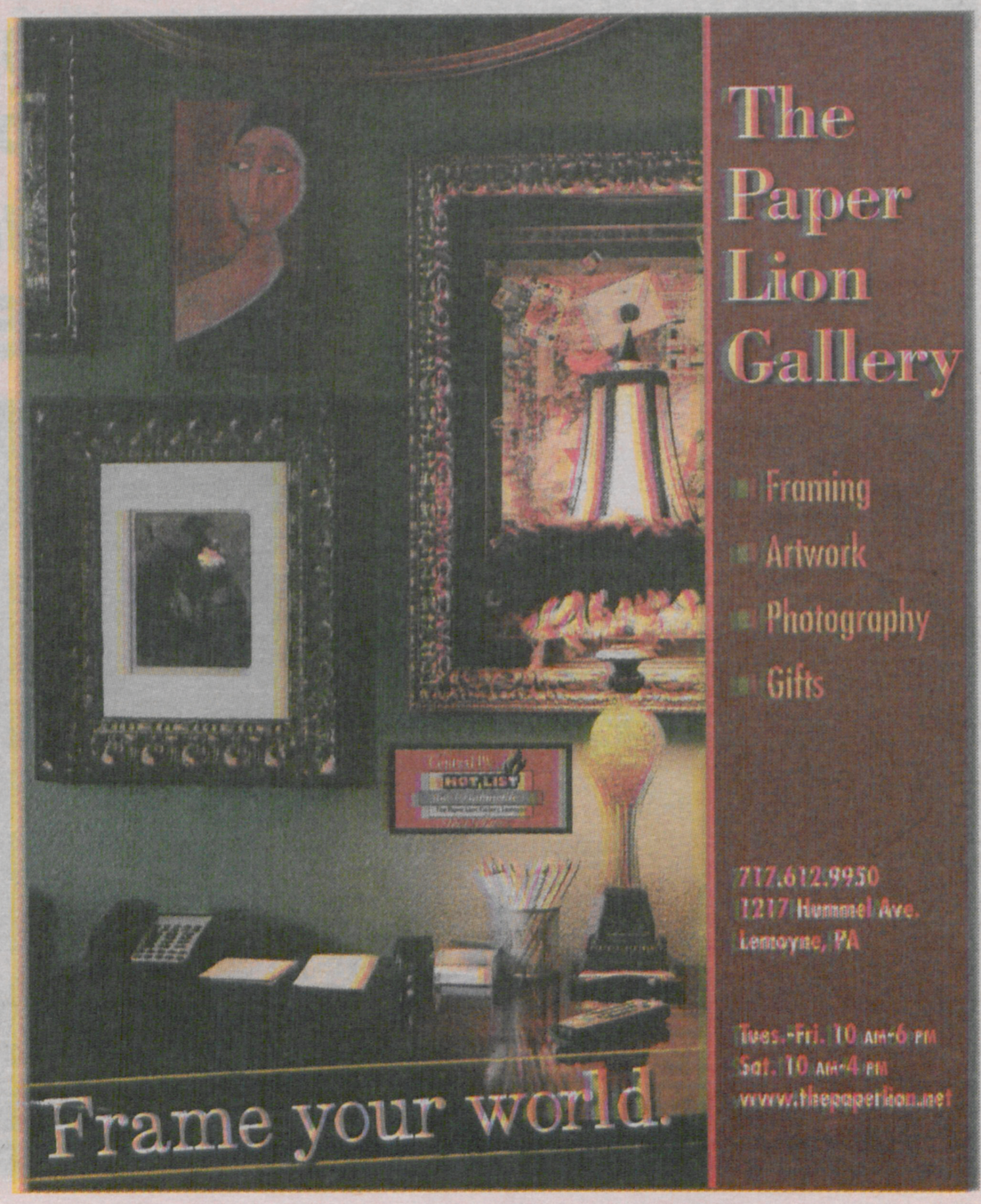


REVIEWS | BOOKS DVDs CDs

LANA DEL REY

Lana Del Rey announces the release of her highly anticipated album 'Born To Die' on January 31, 2012 on Interscope Records.

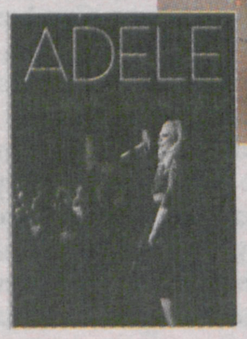
Lana's first single "Video Games" began its life online in July based on a visually arresting video created by Lana. Since then, "Video Games" has amassed a legion of devoted followers, 9 million views on YouTube and hit the #1 position up on release on iTunes in 9 countries, including the UK, Australia, Holland and France.

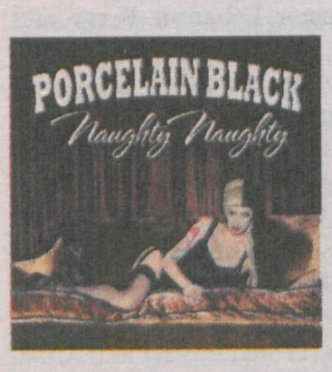
NERO

Features brand new remix of "Me And You" by Steve Angello of Swedish House Mafia (Stream below); plus a Skrillex remix of "Promises" that has 3MM plays on youtube and has not been available in the US before. "Me and You" featured on Nero's' #1 UK Debut Album "Welcome Reality".

ADELLE

Adele's release of "Live At The Royal Albert Hall" concert film has made for an incredible year for her, starting with her #1 album "21", her #1 single "Someone Like You", the global smash "Rolling In The Deep" and her spellbinding live appearance on The Brits. Her album "21" has become the biggest selling album in the world this year -12 million copies sold and counting.





PORCELAIN BLACK

A strong live performer, Porcelain Black's dynamic stage show is both sonically and visually compelling, featuring creative costuming, choreographed dance routines, microphone whipping and Porcelain's signature mix of pop vocals meets metal inspired growl.

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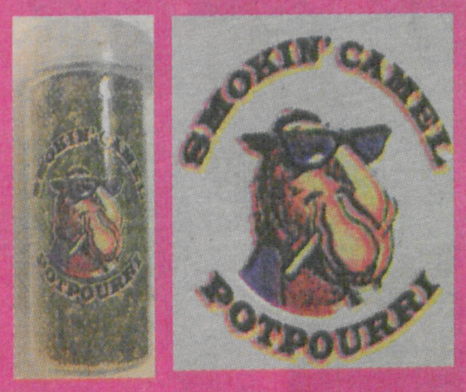

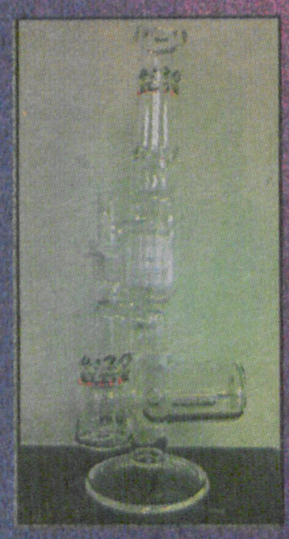

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Chamber Celebrates 5th Anniversary

CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA GAY AND LESBIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

"This is an idea whose time has come," said Russ Boggs in 2007, who has served as president of the Central Pennsylvania Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce since then. The business group celebrates its fifth year in 2012.

Board member Seth Hamill says the chamber has afforded his business, Posh Studios, "the opportunity to expand" and networking has allowed him to "increase our brand exposure and profits."

Board member Bill Krenz, The Hewlett-Packard Company, observes "It's amazing how many LGBT professionals are active in both business and the community-at-large. Our potential for doing good in the community is not sufficiently utilized."

Boggs says the new organization will continue to form partnerships and mutually beneficial agreements. "No need to reinvent the wheel."

Chamber Highlights

- Established in 2007, the Central Pennsylvania Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce has XXX members
- Serves Adams, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Lancaster, Lebanon, Perry, and York counties
- Affiliated with National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce
- Chamber membership is comprised of 85% LGBT members. The remaining 15% are allied members, having joined the organization to network and promote their business to the gay community. Not every member is a business or business owner and some members are nonprofit organization or individuals who want to support the region's gay business community.
- The chamber is partnered with the Harrisburg Regional Chamber of Commerce where it maintains offices and is involved with HRC's business diversity programs

Info: www.cpglcc.org

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transgender column

By Jeanine Ruhsam
president of TransCentralPA

Court Case Advances Transgender Equality

Dec. 6 something big for transgender equality happened quietly in a court in Georgia: it upheld a lower court ruling that Georgia transgender woman Vandy Glenn was illegally fired from her job as a legislative editor in the Georgia General Assembly after she informed her employer she planned to transition from male to female.

Judge Rosemary Barkett wrote the opinion for the unanimous three-judge panel of the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals, saying "The question here is whether discriminating against someone on the basis of his or her gender non-conformity constitutes sex-based discrimination under [Title 9 of] the Equal Protection Clause. …We hold that it does.

"There is thus a congruence between discriminating against transgender and transsexual individuals and discrimination on the basis of gender-based behavioral norms."

"Accordingly, discrimination against a transgender individual because of her gender-nonconformity is sex discrimination, whether it's described as being on the basis of sex or gender," the three-judge panel ruled.

For we lay people, this simply means that the U.S. Constitution prohibits discriminating against a person because they are transgender. If this is challenged- which is unlikely- the next stop is the U.S. Supreme Court.

And, it seems that the large majority of U.S citizens feel that way, based on a recent random digit dial telephone survey of 2,019 adults taken by the Public Religion Research Institute this August and September that was released on November 3. They found that approximately 9-in-10 (89%) Americans—including strong majorities of all religious and partisan groups—agree that transgender people deserve the same rights and protections as other Americans.

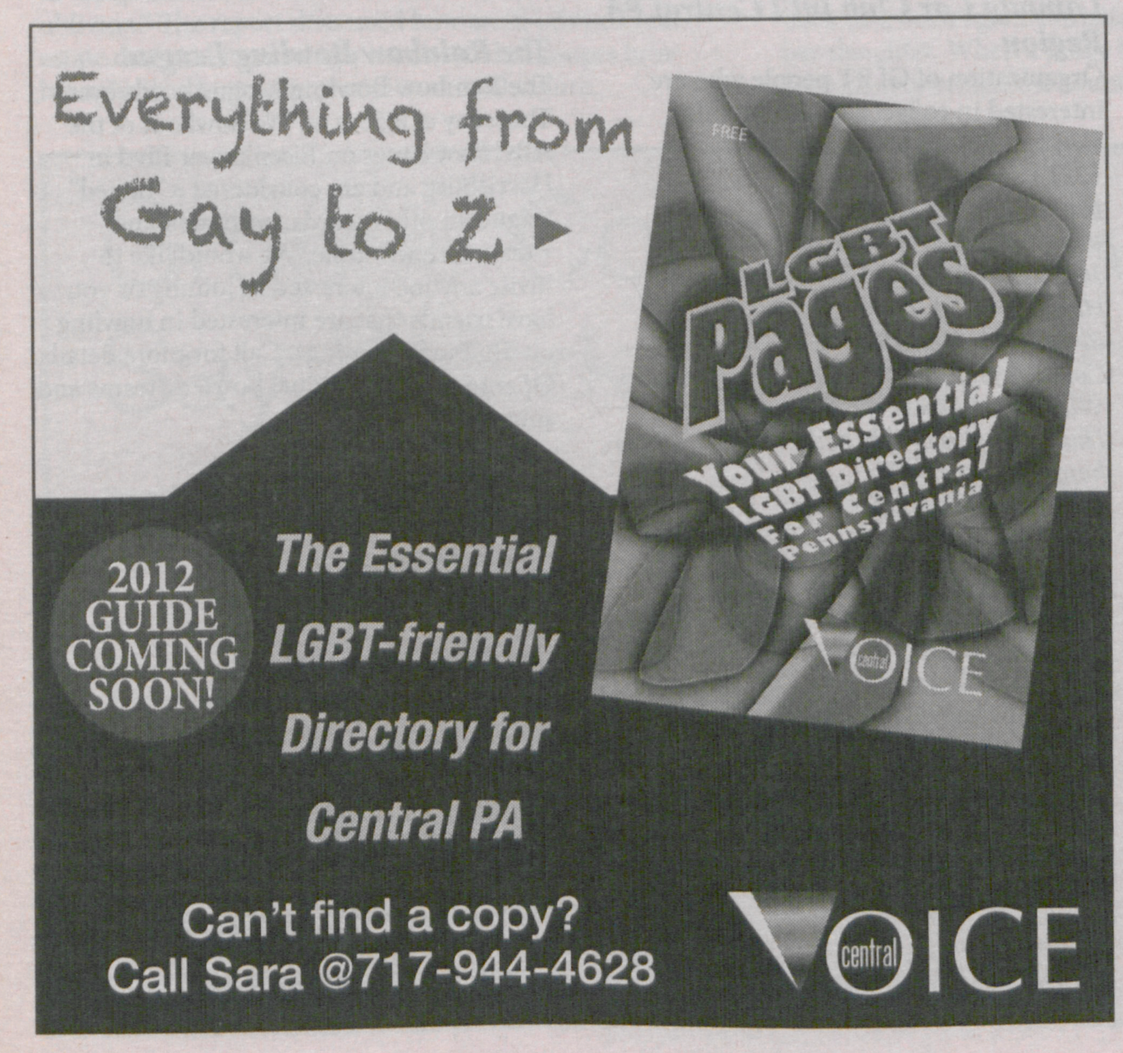
In addition, they found that:

Three-quarters (75%) of Americans agree that Congress should pass laws to protect transgender people from job discrimination. This support persists across the political and religious spectrum.

Approximately three-quarters (74%) of Americans also favor Congress' recent expansion of federal hate crime laws to include crimes committed on the basis of the victim's gender, sexual orientation or gender identity, compared to only 22% who oppose. And, wonderfully, the survey revealed that more than two-thirds (69%) of Americans are able to identify what the term "transgender" means without any assistance.

The understanding and perception of trans people has come a long way in a hurry, which is good. I reflect on the fact that just over two years ago when I first sat at the board of the LGBT Community Center Coalition of Central Pennsylvania that it was the first time that 75% of board members had ever been knowingly in the first-hand presence of a transgender person.

Thank you, central Pennsylvanians, for recognizing that we are really very good people too. This is a good place to live and let live; to love and let love; to work and let work.



St. Luke's Health Network Excludes Same-sex Benefits

In 2011, St. Luke's Health Network, the second largest private sector employer in the Lehigh Valley, updated its internal non-discrimination policy to state that the employer does not discriminate in benefits based on a series of protected classes, including, "sexual preference and gender identity." But when it came time to enroll spouses in health benefits last week, gay employees were not allowed to enroll their same-sex spouses, even when they have made the effort to travel to a state where they were legally married.

Carol Stevens, RN, was excited to see her employer had added benefits for families like hers, but was disappointed when her spouse, Reverend Beth Goudy, Pastor of the Metropolitan Community Church of the Lehigh Valley, whom she legally married in Iowa, was denied enrollment. "I can't understand how giving benefits to an opposite-gender couple who got married in Iowa and denying them to me only because my spouse and I are the same gender isn't violating the hospital's non-discrimination policy," says Stevens.

In the Lehigh Valley most large employers, including Lehigh Valley Health Network, PPL, Air Products, The Morning Call, Muhlenberg College, Lehigh University and the Cities of Allentown and Easton, provide same-sex domestic partner benefits to their employees according to Liz Bradbury, Executive Director of Pennsylvania Diversity Network. She says she spoke to the Director of Human Resources, who told her that St. Luke's 'follows the laws it has to follow' and that it doesn't have to give gay families benefits based on the way its eligibility requirements are written.

"St. Luke's created an obscure loophole to expressly deny gay employees these benefits," says Bradbury. "What's not clear is why? Why tell the world you don't discriminate in benefits, and then deny them?" Bradbury adds that she asked why St. Luke's is going to so much trouble to not give the benefits when giving them would not increase the benefits budget. She got no response. She wonders who at St. Luke's is so dead set against gay families receiving equal benefits.

Adrian Shanker, President of Equality Pennsylvania, commented, "In reality, providing equal pay for equal work, which includes giving the same benefits without discrimination, is just not a controversial issue. A vast majority of Fortune 500 companies offer these benefits because it's common sense corporate policy. It is unfortunate that St. Luke's Health Network has chosen to stay behind the times. St. Luke's Health Network is becoming a loner among companies choosing to discriminate against its LGBT employees."

St. Luke's has responded to gay employees: Your spouse is not eligible to enroll in the group health plan at this time.

In contrast, efforts to win Domestic Partner Benefits for employees took a significant swing this past year, with the Cities of Allentown and Easton both unanimously adopting ordinances to provide these benefits to their employees. Similarly, on December 1st, the Philadelphia City Council took a step further by unanimously voting to mandate that large city contractors provide domestic partner benefits to their employees.

Hospitals all over the Country are following the recommendations of The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Health Care Organizations by offering their LGBT employees equal treatment in the workplace," said Dr. Patricia Sullivan, President of Pennsylvania Diversity Network and former Administrator of Helen Hayes Hospital in New York which has had domestic partner benefits for over 15 years. "You cannot provide a welcoming environment for patients if you don't have a welcoming environment for your staff. Health care benefits equality is a key indicator of commitment to LGBT equity, particularly in hospital settings where the benefits of health care coverage are so evident.

Pennsylvania Diversity Network is the regional LGBT advocacy organization serving North East PA. For more information, visit www.padiversity.org

Equality Pennsylvania is the statewide voice for LGBT Equality in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and works collaboratively to establish a comprehensive network of individuals and organizations united in securing equal rights for the LGBT community. For more information: www.equalitypa.org.

Anyone for Chili & Blues with HotWingJones?

The Ned Smith Center for Nature and Art's next show is "Chili & Blues with HotWingJones" on Jan. 27, 7 p.m. The event is the highly-anticipated sequel to last year's Chili & Blues event, which featured Ann Kerstetter and her All-Star Band of Cronies. The event takes place at the Wooden Nickel Annex, 210 S. Market St., Millersburg.

HotWingJones has been a mainstay in the region's music scene for eight years. Not quite a classic rock band, and not quite a roots rock band, HotWingJones feels familiar, but sounds different. Whatever the description, the band has the distinction of being voted by the readers of Harrisburg Magazine the "Simply the Best" local band in 2004 and 2005, and has received the "Readers Choice Award" for many years running.

Tickets: $25, $22 for center members and include homemade chili and cornbread dinner. Call 717-692-3699 or visit www.nedsmithcenter.org.

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Phone: (717)732-0233
Contact: Michael Reed
Wheelchair Accessible: No information available
Hours: Calls and Emails Can be made Days/ Evenings
Email: mreeddesigns@yahoo.com

Harrisburg Gay Men's & Women's Volleyball
3rd and Bridge St
New Cumberland, PA
Phone: 717.233.3172
Contact: Jim
Wheelchair Accessible: No information available
Hours: Every Wednesday at 6:30 p.m. - 9.30 p.m.

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PO Box 266
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Phone: 717.232.8382
Contact: Judy Chambers
Wheelchair Accessible: No information available

HOWL
HOWL hanging out with lesbians. Group of 140 women.
Contact: Gina Bowers-Miller
Wheelchair Accessible: No information available
Email: howlofpa@yahoo.com
Website: http://www.homestead.com/howlofpa/index.hmtl
Other web address http://groups.yahoo.com/group/howlofpa/ to join

Lambda Car Club Int'l Central PA Region
Organization of GLBT people who are interested in collectable automobiles
Contact: Robert Miller, President
1721 Logan St.
Harrisburg, PA 17102
PH: 610 496-5651
3623 Green Street
Harrisburg, PA 17110
Phone: 717.238.9766
Contact: John Ball
Wheelchair Accessible: no
Hours: Meet monthly at different members houses, call for info
Email: buickbum2@aol.com

Rainbow Pride Rural Project
This project intends to create support for the GLBT community living in rural York, Juniata, Mifflin and Perry Counties. It is funded by the Foundation for Enhancing Communities and housed within Metropolitan Community Church of the Spirit located in uptown Harrisburg, Pa.
2973 Jefferson St.
Harrisburg, Pa. 17110-2127
Phone: 717-236-7387
Contact: Kevin E. Burrell
Wheelchair Accessible: Yes
Email: kevinb2004@msn.com

Students Advocating LGBTA Equality
Shippensburg University Cumberland Union Building
Box 89
Shippensburg, Pa 17265
Phone: 717-477-1616
Contact: Travis Eichelberger
Wheelchair Accessible: No information available
Email: susale@gmail.com
Website: www.ship.edu/~msa/SALE.htm

Susquehanna Club
Group camping open to LGBT people and their friends.
Wheelchair Accessible: No information available
Email: camp@susq.org
Website: www.susq.org

Susquehanna Valley Bears
PO Box 11, Manchester, PA 17345
Contact: Matt S.
Wheelchair Accessible: No Info Available
Email: daddyscub@comcast.net
Website: www.svbears.com

The Pennsmen, Inc
The Pennsmen, Inc are Central PA's glbt leather/levi/kink social organization. Membership is open to anyone over the age of 21 with an interest in the lifestyle. Meetings are held on the second Sunday of each month at the Neptune Lounge @ 3:00pm
PO Box 401
HARRISBURG, PA 17108-0401
Phone: 717-232-3785
Contact: Steven James
Wheelchair Accessible: No information available
Hours: Evenings
Email: pennsmen@pennsmen.org
Website: www.pennsmen.org

The Rainbow Bowling League
The Rainbow Bowling League bowls every Thursday at 8:55 p.m. We bowl out of the ABC East Lanes on Eisenhower Blvd in Harrisburg and are considered a "mixed" league: in other words, both men and women are welcome. We would like to invite anyone interested in joining or you have friends that are interested in bowling on Thursday evenings. Call for more details. Openings for individual bowlers, teams and substitutes.
Phone: 763-8444
Contact: Mark or Robert
Wheelchair Accessible: No information available
Hours: Thursday 8:45 P.M.

Women's Circle
c/o Bobbi Carmitchell
Locust Lane Music, P.O. Box 8301
Lancaster, Pa 17604
Phone: 717.872.4512
Contact: Bobbi Carmitchell
Wheelchair Accessible: No information available
Email: bobbi@womenscircle.org
Website: www.womenscircle.org

The Top 10 Ex-Gay Stories of 2011

By Wayne Besen

In June, I penned a column, "The Fall of the Ex-Gay Myth," which predicted that so-called "ex-gay" programs would crumble from internal rot. "It's time for the discredited 'ex-gay' myth to simply go away and be rightfully viewed as an experiment that was tried and failed," I wrote at the time.

In the months since this column was written the decline of these "pray away the gay" organizations has only accelerated.

Here are the Top 10 ex-gay-related stories of 2011:

1 Bachmann Scandal

Nothing brought the idiocy of reparative therapy into the spotlight more than Truth Wins Out's undercover operation that proved the clinic of Marcus Bachmann, husband of Rep. Michele Bachmann (R-MN), practiced this form of discredited therapy. Prior to the investigation, Marcus had lied to the American people by denying his practice engaged in such quackery. The story made a mockery out of such practices and was featured in media across the globe.

2 John Smid

Love in Action "ex-gay" ministry leader John Smid went public with a startling confession: "I've never met a man who experienced a change from homosexual to heterosexual." The honest words of this "ex-gay" poster boy sent shockwaves through the entire "ex-gay" industry. Observers of these groups asked: "If Smid's hardcore regimen of prayer and therapy did not work for him, whom would it work for?"

3 Exodus SOS

Ex-Gay Watch's David Roberts reported that a Nov. 16 secret summit took place in New York City, where Exodus President Alan Chambers desperately plotted how to "keep Exodus International from social and financial oblivion." The report discussed how an ill-advised real estate deal and increasingly convoluted messages have brought Exodus to the precipice of total failure.

4 Rekers Study Unmasked

Prior to getting caught with an escort from RentBoy.com, Dr. George Rekers was the "ex-gay" industry's most prominent therapist. Much of Rekers reputation was based on a study where he cited the alleged sexual conversion of a boy named "Kraig." Box Turtle Bulletin's Jim Burroway undermined this claim by discovering that "Kraig" had grown up to be a gay man and his family alleged the therapy with Rekers led to his suicide. This story, covered in an excellent CNN AC360 series, demolished a key pillar of "ex-gay" research.

5 Exodus iPhone app

Exodus International created an "ex-gay" iPhone app to promote people using their mobile phones to "pray away the gay." It was so obnoxious that the website Fierce Mobile Content listed it in the Top 5 most offensive apps of 2011. Fortunately, Truth Wins Out launched a 160,000-signature Change.org petition drive to persuade Apple Inc. to remove the "ex-gay" iPhone app.

6 Lisa Miller Saga

Lisa Miller and Janet Jenkins had a Vermont civil union in 2000 and Miller then gave birth to a daughter, Isabella, conceived through artificial insemination. Miller became a born again Christian and fled to Virginia with her daughter. When a judge handed custody of Isabella to Jenkins, Miller fled the country with her daughter. Kenneth L. Miller, 46, of Stuarts Draft, Va., was recently arrested for assisting Lisa Miller as she absconded to Nicaragua. This story is not yet finished and may ensnare anti-gay figures that may have aided and abetted international kidnapping. Keep your eye on this story!

7 Sergio Viula

This man was the leading provider of "ex-gay" quackery in Brazil. In an interview he gave to the Secular Humanist League of Brazil, Viula called such programs "brainwashing" and said, "In fact, ex-gays don't exist – it's pure self-suggestion."

8 Ex-Gay Goes International

As the "ex-gay" industry fails at home, they are opportunistically searching for fresh markets to exploit overseas. A perfect example occurred in Hong Kong, which hired a therapist, Hong Kwai-wah, to cure gay people by urging them to take cold showers when aroused. The controversial hire caused protests from Hong Kong to New York City.

9 Dr. Warren Throckmorton

This Christian therapist from Grove City College has surprisingly emerged as a leading critic of "reparative therapy." A former member of The National Association for Research and Therapy of Homosexuality (NARTH), his knowledge of this topic has made him a ruthlessly effective foe of NARTH's quack-like theories. Even more damaging, he has created a competing therapy model that gives LGBT Christians the option to come out of the closet or hold onto their fundamentalist beliefs – but it does not lie to them by promising that they can pray away the gay.

10 PFOX Lawsuit

Greg Quinlan, President of Parents and Friends of Ex-Gays (PFOX), appeared on television and fabricated an incident that never occurred: "Truth Wins Out if you look further, including Wayne Besen. He's asked for people, you know, somebody needs to run Greg over. He needs to be hit with a bus. Somebody should inject him with AIDS." As a result of Quinlan's fake story, I am preparing a defamation lawsuit against PFOX that will play out in 2012.

Groups Condemn ABC Show "Work It;" Say "Work It" Doesn't Work!

Transgender Law Center, San Francisco LGBT Community Center, and Transgender Economic Empowerment Initiative (TEEI) say promotions for new show "Work It," scheduled to premier Jan. 3 on ABC, present both unrealistic gender-norms and stereotypes about women in the workplace.

According to ABC, "Work It" is about "two unrepentant guy's guys who, unable to find work, dress as women to get jobs as pharmaceutical reps… They've learned the hard way that the current recession is more of a 'man-cession' and their skills aren't in high demand."

"This show is debuting at a time when women continue to face high rates of workplace discrimination and get paid less than men, and when transgender and gender non-conforming people face extraordinary levels of violence and discrimination in their communities and the workplace," said Masen Davis, Executive Director of Transgender Law Center. "The premise of this show, that it is easier to get a job if you present as a woman, is absurd."

Statistics prove that transgender people encounter high rates of discrimination. The report Injustice at Every Turn, published this year by The Task Force, showed that compared to the general population, transgender people face:

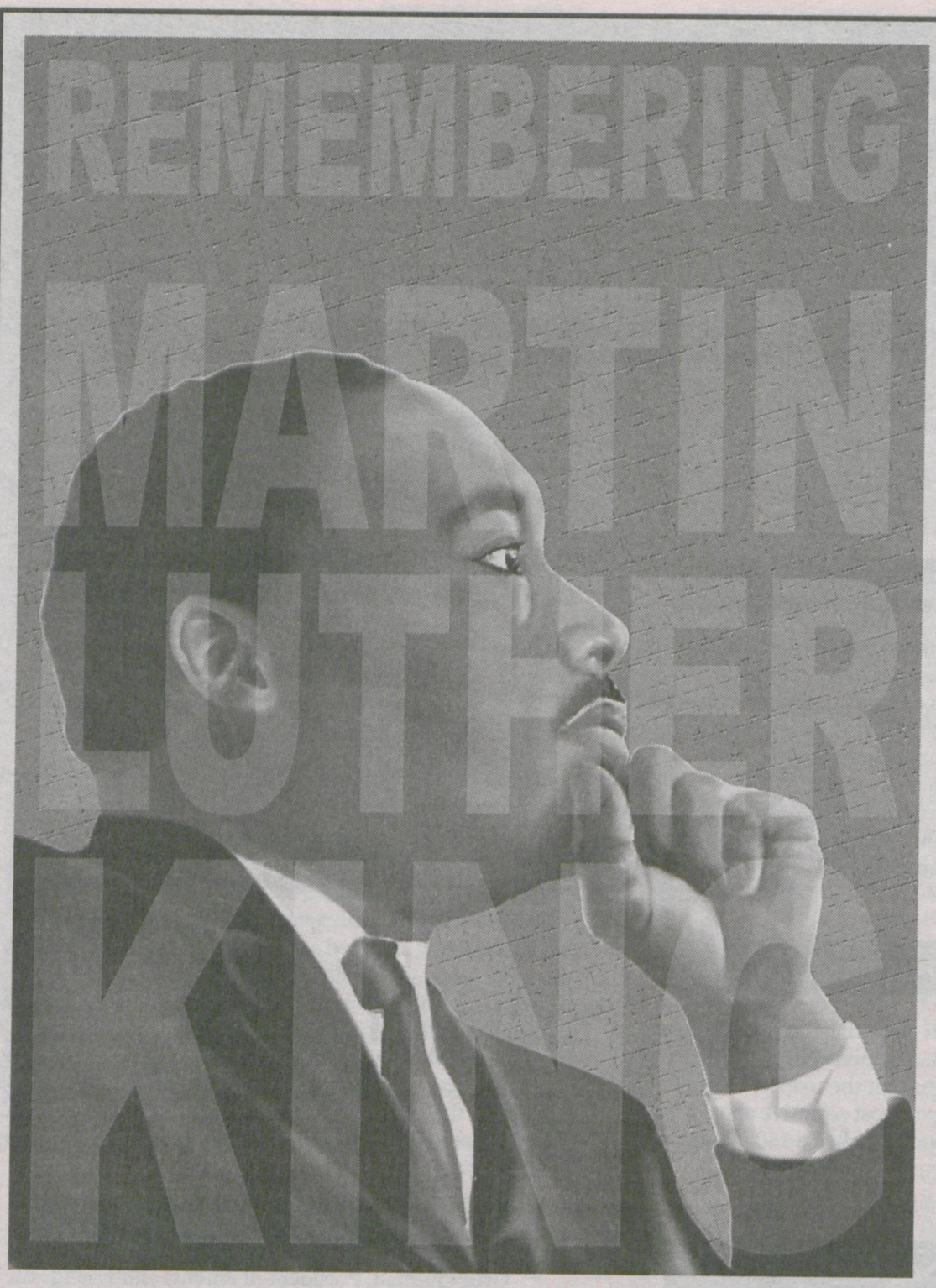
- Double the rates of unemployment
- A strong correlation between job lost due to bias and other ruinous consequences such as four times the rate of homelessness
- Four times the likelihood of a household income of less than $10,000/ year compared to the general population

"This show validates outdated gender-norms and expectations that make it even more difficult for transgender people to get jobs. In these economic times, the plight of anyone facing joblessness is no laughing matter," said Eugénie FitzGerald, Director of Economic Development at the San Francisco LGBT Community Center. "At TEEI we hear stories about discrimination in the workplace every day."

Transgender Law Center is a civil rights organization advocating for transgender communities. Transgender Law Center uses direct legal services, education, community organizing and advocacy to create a world that recognizes and supports the needs of transgender people and their families. Learn more at www.transgenderlawcenter.org.

TEEI is a unique collaborative program designed to help transgender individuals find stable jobs that provide a living wage, benefits, and opportunities for advancement.

For more information visit http://www.teeisf.org/.



Broad Street Market Volunteers Sought for Martin Luther King Event

Broad Street Market has joined the 2012 community partners participating in the Central Pennsylvania Martin Luther King Day of Service, Jan. 16. Since 1994, millions of volunteers have served their communities as part of the National King Day of Service, making a difference and honoring the memory of Dr. King.

The Broad Street Market at 1233 North Third Street is seeking volunteers to help clean up the market, including painting, sweeping, mopping and cleaning windows, as well as trash pick-up outside the market buildings. They also can assist in hanging signs and banners, as well as cleaning out closets and space throughout both buildings. Project start time is 9 a.m.

Those with some general contracting experience are needed to help fix doors, screens and other items that just need some tweaking, as well as those with experience to fix the sound system that is currently inoperable. Donations of supplies are needed, and "angel support" in the form of monetary donations also will be accepted toward the beautification project.

The result will be a fresher, cleaner place to shop for local fruits, vegetables and other market items and for community organizations to hold special events. Special events throughout 2012 already are being planned to reinvigorate this historic market.

Volunteers are asked to dress in clothes that can get dirty or painted on. Those wishing to assist in various projects may want to bring a change of clothes. Food will be provided courtesy of the Broad Street Market, including chicken wings, meat and vegetable trays, and dessert.

Parking is free, and handicap accessible restrooms are available. More information is available at www.centralpamlkday.org. Those wishing to volunteer may email Broad Street Market Manager Elissa Feinstein at manager@broadstreetmarket.org, preferably by January 5.

The Broad Street Market was founded in 1860 and placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1974. The Market continues its legacy as a culturally rich place to experience the broad diversity of fresh food, people and city life.

James Buchanan continued from page 1

a friend after King went to France shows the depth of his feeling for King.

"I am now solitary and alone, having no companion in the house with me," Buchanan wrote. "I have gone a wooing to several gentlemen, but have not succeeded with any one of them. I feel that it is not good for man to be alone; and should not be astonished to find myself married to some old maid who can nurse me when I am sick provide good dinners for me when I am well, and not expect from me any very ardent or romantic affection."

Loewen said their relationship — though interrupted due to foreign-service obligations — ended only with King's death in 1853.

In the late 1990s, Loewen visited Wheatland, the mansion in Lancaster, Pa., where Buchanan spent his later years.

Loewen said he asked a staffer at Wheatland if Buchanan was gay, and the reply was: "He most definitely was not."

Loewen said the staffer pointed to a portrait of Ann Coleman, the daughter of a wealthy iron maker, whom Buchanan was engaged to briefly 1819 — shortly before she committed suicide.

However, Loewen scoffed at the staffer's suggestion that the brief engagement to Coleman proved Buchanan was heterosexual.

Loewen said Buchanan showed little interest in Coleman, appeared more interested in her fortune, and possibly contributed to her suicide due to his emotional detachment.

Patrick Clarke, the director of Wheatland, said the staff now takes a neutral stance on Buchanan's sexual or affectional preference.

"There's no solid proof that Buchanan was heterosexual, nor is there solid proof that he was homosexual," Clarke said. "If we ever come up with a smoking gun that proves it one way or the other, I would definitely encourage our staff to share it with the public."

But, he said Ann Coleman's portrait no longer is displayed at Wheatland.

The tours focus mainly on the mansion's décor and activities that took place there during the later years of Buchanan's life, he added.

Wheatland also has about 45 volunteer tour guides, and to Clarke's knowledge, none of the guides is openly gay.

"The volunteer guides who we train to share the history of James Buchanan's life and times are directed to take a neutral stance regarding [his] sexual preference," Clarke said.

But Clarke said he wouldn't object if a volunteer offered a personal opinion that Buchanan was gay, if asked by a visitor.

"When you have 50 minutes to take people through a nine-room house, there's only so much you can discuss," Clarke said. "But if the question is raised, the guide may express a personal opinion."

Loewen said many historians rate Buchanan as one of the worst U.S. presidents. Buchanan was part of the pro-slavery wing of the Democratic Party, and corruption plagued his administration.

But Loewen said those flaws shouldn't discourage members of the LGBT community from acknowledging Buchanan's status as a gay man.

"Lots of gay people have been exemplary," he said. "Let's look at Walt Whitman. For my money, he's the best poet in the history of the country. But we also have to acknowledge the failures. If we only admit that really great people are gay, what kind of history is that? And how is that believable? It's ridiculous. We have to tell it like it was."

As a heterosexual male, Loewen added, he has no hidden agenda in outing Buchanan.

"I'm not gay," Loewen said. "I don't run around trying to find gay folks or black folks underneath every rock. But I'm not going to ignore clear evidence."

Timothy Cwiek holds a bachelor of art degree in U.S. history from West Chester University. He has written for Philadelphia Gay News since the late 1970s and written freelance articles for numerous publications on topics such as the Lincoln assassination, the Kennedy family, the shootings at Kent State University, first ladies and the macrobiotic movement in America.

PA House & Senate Forms LGBT Equality Caucus

Based on a suggestion made by Equality PA in early 2011, members of the state House and Senate have formed an LGBT Equality Caucus.

It is the first caucus of its kind in the Keystone state's legislative body dedicated solely to educating legislators on the lives and challenges facing Pennsylvania's lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) citizens as well as being a voice on equality issues within the legislature.

So far, the caucus has drawn 20 members who have agreed to support a comprehensive mission.

The mission "is to promote lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) equality. The bi-partisan LGBT Equality Caucus will be comprised of Members of the General Assembly who are strongly committed to achieving the full enjoyment of human rights for LGBT people in the Commonwealth and around the nation. By serving as a resource for Members of the General Assembly, their staff, and the public on LGBT issues, the Caucus will work toward the extension of equal rights, the repeal of discriminatory laws, the elimination of hate-motivated violence, and the improved health and well-being for all regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity/expression." Caucus co-chair Rep. Dan Frankel, D-Allegheny, said, "We know that a solid majority of Pennsylvanians support changing state law to make it more fair and equal on several issues. For example, we have seen around 70 percent constant support over the past eight years for legislation to ban discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity or expression in employment, housing, credit and public accommodations. I want this caucus to help the legislature be as forward-looking on these issues as the people we represent. Equality Pennsylvania deserves thanks for suggesting the idea of this caucus and working with legislators to help make it happen."

Co-chair Sen. Daylin Leach, D-Montgomery, said, "I've been working to legalize marriage equality in Pennsylvania for quite some time, and I am eager to work with my colleagues in the LGBT Equality Caucus and bring those efforts to fruition. We need to end the unjust and hurtful discrimination under current state law that denies same sex couples the benefits we offer married couples. I am hopeful that by standing together, united in our common cause, the members of the Caucus will dissolve all of the barriers to building families that gay and lesbian couples currently face."

Rep. Babette Josephs, D-Phila., another longtime advocate for LGBT Pennsylvanians, said, "I am honored to be chosen to be a co-convener of this Caucus. No longer will members of the LGBT community be treated as second class citizens. I want their families to be valued just as more traditional ones are; that means inheritance tax will be forgiven; hospital visitation allowed, and contracts between loving partners will be honored. My ultimate goal is to make same sex marriage as valid and respected as different sex unions. We cannot call ourselves a civilized society if we do not do at least that."

"We are so pleased and honored that so many members worked with us to form a Caucus. It is a very positive step and possibly even a game changer," said Equality PA Executive Director Ted Martin. "For far too long, the state's LGBT community has looked at Harrisburg as the place where their rights were routinely ignored or worse, where their lives become a convenient political football batted about to score points in tight campaigns. Our hope is that the Caucus will begin to change all that by educating members and providing a balanced point of view to those who use misinformation and sometimes hateful speech to move their own agenda. We think the Caucus can help to change the tone of discussion and can give members a real view of how LGBT people live and are affected daily by discrimination in everything from employment and housing, to inheritance rights and of course, relationships."

Members of the new caucus are: Frankel, Josephs and Reps. Shapiro, B. Boyle, K. Boyle, Brennan, Payton, Davis, McGeehan, Bradford, Brown, Briggs, Buxton, Cohen, DeLissio, Curry, DePasquale, M. O'Brien, Gerber, Roebuck, M. Smith, Santarsiero, Sturla and Sens. Leach, Ferlo and Farnese.

This action by members of the General Assembly to form an LGBT Equality Caucus mirrors the consistent viewpoints of a majority of Pennsylvanians who agree that providing basic civil rights is not a controversial issue," said Equality PA President Adrian Shanker. I am hopeful that this caucus will be successful in advancing our rights in the state level next year in the same way so many towns and cities across Pennsylvania have done on the local level this year."

Andy Hoover, legislative director for the American Civil Liberties Union of Pennsylvania, said, "As important as it is for the LGBT community and its allies to lobby the legislature, it's also important for the community to know that someone at the capitol has its back. The ACLU of Pennsylvania applauds all of the members of the LGBT Equality Caucus for their willingness to stand up for equal rights."

Santorum Blames Gay Marriage

Rick Santorum has pinned gay marriage as the reason fewer Americans are getting married.

According to a report released Wednesday by the Washington D.C. think tank Pew Research Center, the current number of married adults over 18 has dropped to a record of 51 percent. That's a 21 percent drop from 1960.

Santorum, considered the GOP presidential field's most outspoken candidate on marriage equality, tweeted on Wednesday to his nearly 46,000 followers, "Here is 1 effect of changing definition of marriage," along with a Huffington Post link to a story on the study. Pew researcher D'Vera Cohn never mentioned gay marriage as a reason for the decline.

When the Huffington Post asked, "Why aren't people getting married?" Cohn answered: "There are a number of things going on that could play a role. One is that there are other kinds of living arrangements that are socially acceptable now that may not have been in the past, such as living with someone without being married, living on your own, or even living as a single parent. So people may feel they have options that they didn't used to have.

Another factor in some cases is that among Americans who complete college, or education beyond that, they may want to get their education done and get launched in a career before they settle down and get married. From some surveys we've taken, we've had people say that it's important, at least for men, to be financially able to provide for a family before they get married. It may [also] be that some couples feel they don't have the financial wherewithal to have a wedding yet."

Humane Society Receives $50,000 from Community Aid

Local organization Community Aid has donated $50,000 from their thrift store operations to the Humane Society of Harrisburg Area (HSHA) to assist HSHA with providing additional community services such as low-cost vaccination clinics and low-cost spay and neuter.

Community Aid is a local faith-based non-profit organization that was established last year and operates thrift stores in Mechanicsburg and Hanover. Revenue from the store is recycled back into the community to partners of Community Aid, including HSHA.

"Thanks to the generous support from our community, we are glad to be able to share resources with HSHA. We appreciate our donors, shoppers and partners who make this grant available," said Glenn Chandler, director of Community Aid. "HSHA helps us to return the collected resources back into our area and make a difference for local people and pets. Community Aid is grateful to help in a local and practical way."

Donations to Community Aid can be made at one of their many bins placed around the community, including at HSHA, and at their store.

Voter Majority Supports Gay Worker Protections

A survey released last month found a vast majority of voters support protections for gay workers.

The poll released by the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) in partnership with Greenberg Quinlan Research found that 77 percent of voters support protecting lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people from discrimination in employment.

"Indeed, support for anti-discrimination laws and policies are so non-controversial that overwhelming majorities of Republicans, conservatives and observant Christians support them as well," the report's authors wrote.

Seventy percent of Republicans and sixty-seven percent of conservatives support such protections.

The poll also found that a large majority (87%) of respondents believe it is illegal under federal law to fire someone for his or her sexual orientation, while 78 percent believe it is illegal under state law.

The poll demonstrates strong support for the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA), a proposed federal bill that would outlaw workplace discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. ENDA has been introduced in every Congress since 1994 (except the 109th; 2005-2007).

Pollsters surveyed 800 likely voters between November 9 and 13. The poll has a margin of error of +/- 3.46 percentage points.

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OPEN STAGE

Gourmet Risqué TWO SHOWS!
Jan. 14, 7 & 9 p.m.
Sticky Buns Burlesque & Glitterama! present: GOURMET RISQUÉ
Greggy Glitteratti, Paco Fish and the motliest of crews from Baltimore bring the best of the best of Burlesque, Variety and Vaudeville to Open Stage. The crazy gang is back for two shows! From the sultry, sweet, and sleazy atmosphere to the discreet and oh so attentive service, a visit to Gourmet Risqué will leave you licking your lips and hooting for more.

COURT STREET CABARET

March 16 & 17, 8 p.m.
Stuart Landon is back with all his friends for another rousing rendition of Court Street Cabaret this season! The best of Broadway and beyond is sure to please your ears and leave your toes tappin'.

HERSHEY THEATRE

"A Bridge Too Far" Classic Film at Hershey Theatre
Jan. 8, 2 p.m.
Tickets: $7 each or 6-packs of tickets for $30
"A Bridge Too Far" is an adaptation of Cornelius Ryan's book about the Battle of Arnhem. In 1944, the Allied powers tried to hasten the end of World War II by capturing the six bridges connecting Holland to Germany. Plagued by misinformation, adverse conditions and overconfidence, the operation ended in defeat. Sir Richard Attenborough directed the star-laden cast, including James Caan, Michael Caine, Sean Connery, Elliot Gould, Gene Hackman, Anthony Hopkins, Lawrence Olivier, Ryan O'Neal, Robert Redford and Maximillian Schell.
717-534-3405
1-800-745-3000
HersheyTheatre.com

Rain: A Tribute To The Beatles
Jan. 26, 7:30 p.m.
Tickets: $65, $55, $45. Processing fees apply
RAIN, the internationally-acclaimed multi-media Beatles concert, returns by popular demand! In 1964, a group of boys from Liverpool changed the face of rock 'n' roll. Together longer than The Beatles themselves, RAIN has mastered every song, gesture and nuance of the legendary group, delivering a totally live, note-for-note performance. RAIN covers the Fab Four from their very first Ed Sullivan Show appearance through the Abbey Road album, the psychedelic late 60's and their long-haired hippie, hard-rocking rooftop days. For the long time band members the music is first and foremost. All the music is performed live, with no pre-recorded tapes or sequences.

WHITAKER CENTER

Special intimate acoustic evening with Dave Mason
Jan. 20, 8pm
Sunoco Performance Theater
Tickets: $32& $38; 717-214-ARTS (2787)
David Thomas "Dave" Mason is an English singer, songwriter, and guitarist from Worcester, who first found fame with the rock band Traffic. In his long career, Mason has played and recorded with many of the era's most notable rock musicians, including Jimi Hendrix, Delaney Bramlett, Michael Jackson, The Rolling Stones, Eric Clapton, George Harrison, Fleetwood Mac and Cass Elliot.

An Evening with Stephane Wrembel
Jan. 28, 7:30 p.m.
Sunoco Performance Theater
Tickets: $21.50 & $26.50
French born guitar virtuoso, Stephane Wrembel is best known as a composer and performer of Gypsy Jazz. Wrembel has issued several albums, under his own name and as The Stephane Wrembel Trio, and his song Big Brother was featured on the soundtrack for Woody Allen's Vicky Cristina Barcelona. In 2011, he composed the theme track for Allen's film, Midnight In Paris, titled Bistro Fada.

STRAND CAPITOL

YSO: Blood, Sweat & Tears
Jan. 28, 8 p.m.
Strand Theatre
A musical institution, Blood Sweat & Tears has left an indelible mark on the American music scene since 1968. One of the greatest horn bands in the history of popular music, BS&T's alumni roster reads like a Who's Who of the world's greatest jazz and rock musicians. Their hits include: You've Made Me So Very Happy, Spinning Wheel, And When I Die, Hi-De-Ho, Lucretia Mac Evil, Go Down Gamblin, God Bless The Child, Sometimes in Winter.

Ladysmith Black Mambazo
Feb. 11, 7:30 p.m.
Strand Theatre
Tickets: $30, $35, $40
Many Americans were introduced to them on Paul Simon's landmark Graceland album, but the voices of this a cappella vocal group have married the intricate rhythms and harmonies of their native South African musical traditions with other musical styles to great acclaim, throughout their career. Their talents have garnered praise and accolades within the recording industry, and they have performed with artists such as Stevie Wonder, Josh Groban, Dolly Parton and Ben Harper. This feel-good show will entertain your eyes as well as your ears, when the songs lead into dance routines with synchronized moves and head-high kicks that are a Zulu tradition. Share in this joyous and uplifting experience and join the group's mission to "spread the message of Peace, Love and Harmony all over the world."

FULTON OPERA HOUSE

God of Carnage
Tony Award, Best Play
Feb. 1-19
Fulton Opera House
Tickets online @ www.thefulton.org or 717-397-7425
Yazmina Reza's savagely funny comedy has been described as a comedy of manners...without the manners. When two well-to-do New York City couples meet to discuss their sons' playground altercation, the thin veneer of civility that shrouds their lives is quickly usurped by more savage instincts. Watch out as cordial banter gives way to adults behaving very, very badly. "Intelligent entertainment...a knockabout farce." The Wall Street Journal

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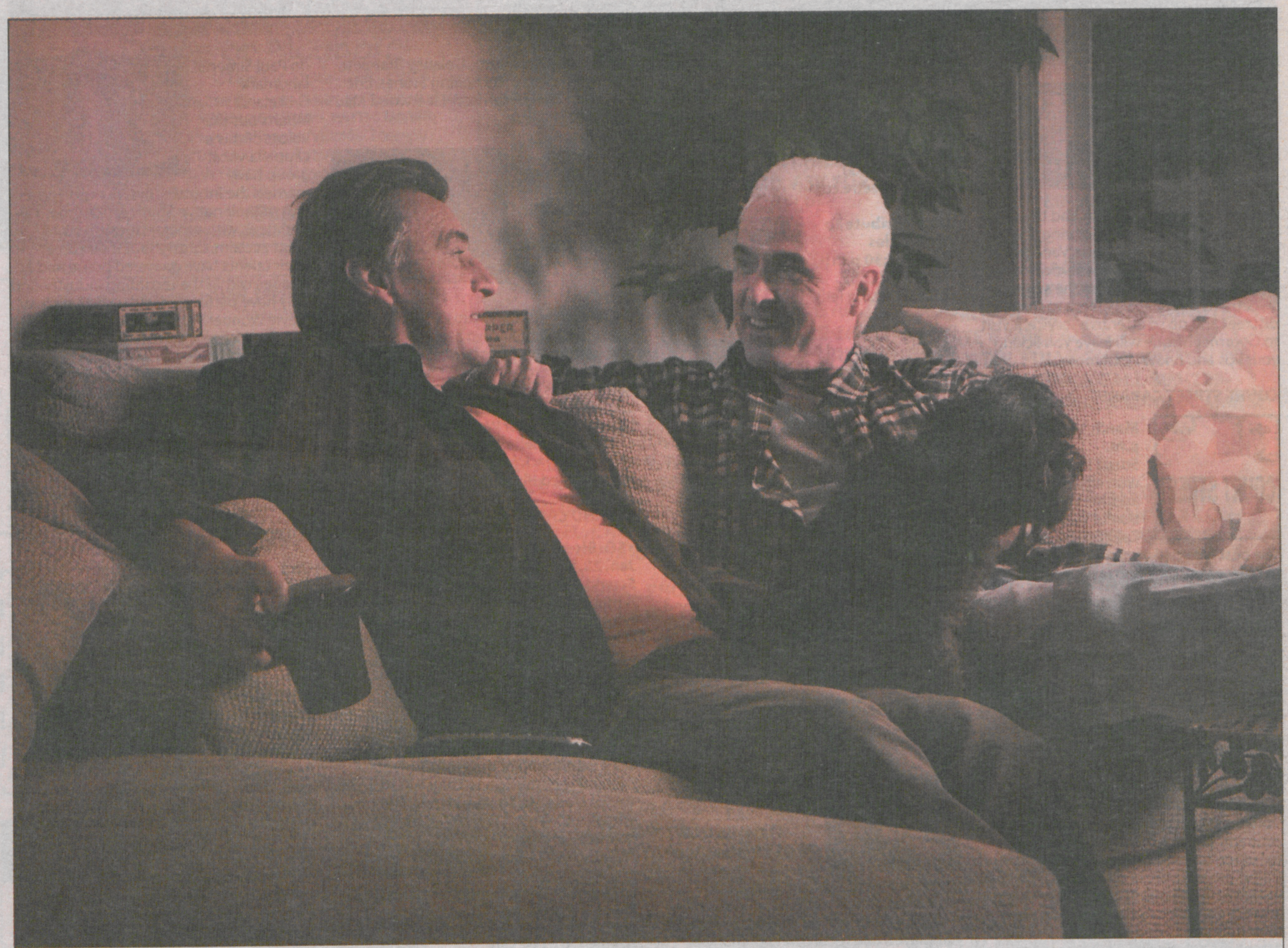

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